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THREE LIFE VIEWS: THAT OF ECCLESIASTES, OF OMAR KHAYYÁM,
AND OF ROBERT BROWNING.

Submitted by

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(A.B., Goucher College, 1910)

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the degree of Master of Arts

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FOREWORD

In this paper the writer has attempted to bring together Ecclesiastes, Omar Khayyám, and Robert Browning in such a way that their likenesses and differences may be clearly evident. The Browning material is so vast in comparison with that of the other two men that it has been necessarily limited in order to keep the paper in proper proportions. Only those features of Browning's philosophy have been considered that have direct relationship to the life-views of the other two men under consideration. Part I consists largely of direct quotations from the men themselves and from authorities who have written about them. Part II contains the writer's conclusions drawn from Part I.

PART I

EXPOSITION OF THE LIFE-VIEWS OF ECCLESIASTES, OMAR KHAYYÁM
AND ROBERT BROWNING



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EXPOSITION OF THE LIFE-VIEWS OF ECCLESIASTES,
OMAR KHAYYÁM, AND ROBERT BROWNING.

I

INTRODUCTION

Inasmuch as a man is the child of the age in which he lives, it is well to consider the background of a writer before trying to interpret his message. Moreover, men of antiquity and of the Middle Ages, whose manuscripts have been mutilated and added to, are sometimes almost overshadowed by their commentators. Therefore, in this paper not only the writings of these men, Ecclesiastes, Omar Khayyám, and Robert Browning, will be considered, but their backgrounds as well, and in the cases of the first two only writings which are considered genuine by the authorities will be used.

One is tempted to agree with Ecclesiastes that there is no new thing under the sun, for when one feels he has found something new, he soon discovers others have thought his thoughts long since. Dr. Forbush was so struck with the likeness of Omar Khayyam to Ecclesiastes that he wrote the latter in the metre of the former,¹ and Dr. Sargent recognized in Browning's Rabbi an answer to every plaint of

A. Limits of the paper.

B. Others who have touched upon this subject.

1. Ecclesiastes in the Metre of Omar.

Omar, writing a drama made up entirely of lines from the two poems.¹ Commentators on Ecclesiastes frequently refer to Omar or Browning either for comparison or contrast, while many scholars feel assured Browning had Omar's potter in mind when he praised the potter who shaped him. Even though the study of these three men, so different and yet in many ways so alike, is not new, it is at least interesting.

The paper is in two parts. Part I considers each man separately, his background, the opinions of scholars concerning his life-view, and in the cases of Omar and Ecclesiastes, the authenticity of the writings. Then, the man's attitude toward life is expressed in his own words. As occasion may justify, the men are compared and contrasted with comments of authorities as well as of the present writer. Part II collects the material gathered in Part I so that the three men's attitudes toward life as a whole, toward God, knowledge, pleasure, love, death, and immortality are considered in close proximity. The summary covers both Part I and Part II.

C. Method of
procedure.

1. Omar and the Rabbi.

II

ECCLESIASTES

The general opinion of Ecclesiastes is that it is A. Various most pessimistic, reflecting bitterness of spirit, but ^{opinions about} Ecclesiastes. when one really begins to study the book and what others have said about it, he begins to realize there are many conflicting estimates and points of view. Matthew Arnold maintained^I it was the wisest and worst understood book in the Bible^I and Dr. Martin said, "It is quite beyond any human capacity to read and estimate all that has been written upon this one little book."² Heine termed it "The Canticles of Scepticism"; Delitzsch, "The Canticles of the Fear of God"; Renan praised it as the only charming book that a Jew had ever written, touching our grief at every point; Frederick the Great reckoned it a true mirror of princes and regarded it as one of the most valuable books in Scripture;² Gelimer, the Vandal king, led in chains in the triumph of Belisarius, walked without a tear or sigh, finding a secret consolation in the oft-repeated phrase, "Vanitas, vanitatum! omnia vanitas!" Jerome read the book with his disciple, Blaesilla, that he might persuade her to renounce those vanities for the life of the

I. Moffatt, Literary Illustrations to Ecclesiastes p.vii

2. The New Century Bible, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs. p. 211-212

NOTES

The general opinion of the students is that it is a
most practical, religiously significant of spirit, but
when one really begins to study the book and what others
have said about it, he begins to realize there are many
conflicting opinions and points of view. William Arnold
states that it was the vision and not a mystical book
in the Bible and Dr. Martin said, "It is a book
any human capacity to read and understand all that has been
written upon this one little book." "The Genesis of the
Genesis of Genesis" is the only book that
has a few bad bits, however, and it is not
good; therefore the book is not a book of
wisdom and is regarded as one of the most valuable books
in the library. William, the French king, was in charge
in the church of England, which shows a few
bits, showing a great deal of the old
philosophy, "Vivamus, vegetemus, moriamur" is the motto
the book with the Bible, William, that he should per-
suade her to renounce those practices for the sake of the
The book is a most interesting and valuable book
and should be read by all.

convent at Bethlehem while Luther found in it a healthy *Politica*, the very mirror of magistracy and active life, as contrasted with that of the monks and friars who opposed him. Thomas à Kempis took its watchword as the text of *DE IMITATIONE CHRISTI*; Pascal found in it the echo of restless scepticism.¹ Tolstoy considered it an expression of Epicurean escape from the terrible plight in which people find themselves as they awaken to the fact of existence,² while Morris Jastrow called him neither a scoffer nor a pessimist but "an easy going ~~dilltan~~-dilettante who unfolds in a series of charming, witty, and loosely connected causeries his view of life, as gained by long and varied experience."³ The most extreme view seems to be that of one commentator who says it may be regarded as a breviary of the most modern materialism and of extreme licentiousness.⁴ It is quite evident one gets out of it just about what he brings to it in life experience and philosophy. It is not a book for youth but is written for mature minds, St. Jerome saying it is for middle aged people while Schopenhauer believes no one can appreciate it until he is at least seventy.⁵

1. The Cambridge Bible for Schools, Ecclesiastes. p.9

2. Moffatt, J. Literary Illustrations to Ecclesiastes. p.2

3. Jastrow, M., A Gentle Cynic. p.9

4. The New Century Bible, Prov. Ec. and Song of Songs. p.212

5. Forbush, W.B., Ecclesiastes in the Metre of Omar. p.10

What is this most modern book of the Bible?¹ The meaning of Ecclesiastes is obscure. In our Bibles it is translated "preacher" but the scholars are not satisfied with that interpretation. Some believe the book to be a careful treatise, others, a collection of detached reflections, still others, a dialogue after the manner of Plato, and finally there are those who believe it to be a compilation from various hands.² Jastrow has hit upon a happy solution of the problem in his GENTLE CYNIC. He thinks most of the book was written by one man, the editor putting in pious comments here and there, writing an introduction and conclusion, thus emphasizing the old Hebrew fear of God. By deleting these verses, Jastrow has reduced the book to a consistent philosophy of the vanity of life sweetened with the joy of living happily in the present. The Hebrew name given to the book is Koheleth, a nom de plume. It is a participial form of a verb meaning 'to call' and being feminine in form might mean 'wisdom'. It could hardly mean 'king' which has at times been thought the meaning.³ One commentator interprets it "the sort of person who addresses an assembly", another, "the sort of person who speaks for the assembly".⁴ Most are agreed to drop all discussion and simply use the

B. Meaning of Ecclesiastes; acceptance of the term "Koheleth".

1. Forbush, W., Ecclesiastes in the Metre of Omar. p.9

2. New Century Bible. p.213

3. Ibid. p.213

4. Forbush, W. Ecclesiastes in the Metre of Omar. p.8

term "Kohaleth" in place of any translation. It makes little difference whether one or many are speaking, the view of life depicted is alive and vivid. Man is burdened by the unintelligible world pressing heavily upon his soul; he can not solve the problem of the Universe.

The date of the book is equally a matter of dispute, ranging over nearly a thousand years from B.C. 900 to B.C. 70.¹ C. The time of writing as it influenced the writer.

For years it was taken for granted that Solomon, "the son of David, king in Jerusalem" wrote it, depicting his own life of ease and luxury, his search after wisdom and his experiences with many concubines, but internal evidence disproves this. Solomon always reigned in Jerusalem, so why should the writer use the past tense; David was his only predecessor, so why should he say, "many kings before me." The historical allusions and the language itself point to a later period, probably about the last of the third century B.C. or the first part of the second. The years following the death of Alexander were hard for the whole East, especially for Palestine. She was the apple of discord, possessed by the Ptolemies but claimed by the Seleucidae, while within she was ~~rava~~ oppressed by corrupt officials, so she suffered the ravages of war and the uncertainties of unstable government.² Such a background

1. Cambridge Bible for Schools. p.7

2. International Critical Commentary, Ecclesiastes.p.62

seems the proper setting for Koheleth's attitude towards kings, advising men to say nothing against the king lest it come to his ears and he suffer, his seeing of injustice and corruption, unable to understand or to change conditions.

Koheleth sums up his own philosophy in the opening chapter of his book, when he bemoans the monotony of repetition in nature and in human life. There seems to be no progress in the world in spite of continued and uninterrupted activity.^I The rivers run into the sea and yet the sea is never full: the eye is never satisfied with seeing nor the ear with hearing: generation succeeds generation finding no new thing under the sun: that which has been is that which ever shall be: man lives and dies: so "what gain has a man of all his toil, which he toils under the sun." Over and over again as he contemplates the universe, Koheleth comes to the conclusion, "Vanity of Vanities, all is vanity and a chasing after the wind." D. His life-view.

"What gain has a man of all his toil,
Which he toils under the sun?
Generation comes and generation goes,
But the earth remains for ever.
The sun rises and the sun sets,
And to his rising place he returns.
Around to the south and circling to the north,
Around and around goes the wind,
And on its circuits the wind returns.

I. Jastrow, M. A Gentle Cynic. p. 121

All streams flow into the sea,
 But the sea is not full.
 To the place whither the streams flow,
 From there they flow back again.
 Everything is wearied,
 Beyond human utterance,
 Beyond sight and hearing.
 What has been is that which shall be;
 And what has happened is that which shall happen,
 So that there is nothing new under the sun.
 If something occurs of which one says, "See, this
 is new"- ages before us it has already happened.
 Former occurrences are not recorded, and later occur-
 ences also shall not be remembered by the ages that
 are to come."I

In his endeavor to solve the problem of the Universe
 he thinks of God as a supreme being who mocks mankind,
 putting "eternity" in his heart, making him long to grasp
 the unintelligible and forever making it impossible for
 him to understand. "It is a sorry business which God has
 given the children of men for their affliction,"² making
 it in vain to even try to achieve knowledge. God is in-
 scrutible, holding man in a net of fate, evil chance
 overtaking him when he least expects it and apparently
 least deserves it. There is no justice for the evil pros-
 per while the good suffer.

"And again I experienced under the sun that
 The race is not to the swift,
 Nor the battle to the strong;
 Wise men lack an income,
 Prophets do not possess riches,
 And the learned lack wealth,
 But time and chance overtake them all.

1. Jastrow, M. A Gentle Cynic, Translation of Ecclesiastes p.201-2
 2. Ibid. p.203

Furthermore, man does not know his time. As fish are caught in a net, and as birds are trapped, so the children of men are trapped at an unlucky moment, when (evil) comes upon them."¹

It is useless to try to relieve the oppressed or to try to improve corruption because God has foreordained all things to put fear into man's heart and who can make straight what he has intended to be crooked?

"Do not say, why is it that the former days were better than these, for it is not out of wisdom that thou puttest this question. Consider the work of God, for who is able to straighten out what he has made crooked? Therefore, in the day of prosperity, have a good time; and when the day of adversity comes, remember that God has made the one as well as the other, so as to render it impossible for man to find out anything of what is to come after."²

Moreover, God is afar off apparently wholly uninterested in mankind; it is well to go to the house of worship but not to expect much from one's prayers.

"Observe thy pilgrimages to the house of God but draw nigh to hear, rather than to have fools offer a sacrifice, for they do not know enough to do any harm.

Be not rash with thy mouth, and be not led hastily to utter a word before God, for God is in heaven and thou art upon earth. Therefore, let thy words be few."³

He turns to madness and folly for satisfaction and then decides that after all perhaps wisdom is better to pursue, but, what is the use of being wise when death ends all?

-
1. Jastrow, M., *A Gentle Cynic*, Translation of Ecclesiastes, p. 232.
 2. Ibid., p. 223-224.
 3. Ibid., p. 216.

...and does not know his life. He
...in a way, and he does not know
...of the children of men are judged of an in-
...when (evil) comes upon them.
It is useless to try to believe the appearance or to try to
...and has been informed to be obedient

The answer, who is it that the Father says
...for it is not out of his
...but that they are not in the Father's
...the word of God, for who is able to understand
...that he has been created? Therefore, in the day
of judgment, have a good time; and when the day
of judgment comes, remember that God has made
the one as well as the other, so as to render it
impossible for man to find the meaning of what
he is after.

Moreover, God is after all essentially single manifested in
...; it is well to go to the place of worship, but not
...to expect more from one's prayers.

"Remember the distinction to the name of God
but more to love, rather than to have knowledge
after a knowledge, for love is not enough
to do any thing.

Do not rush with the words, and we are not
...to enter a word before God, for God is
in heaven and there are many words. Therefore,
let the words be few."

He says to God and to all the saints and then
...that after all human wisdom is better to pursue
...what is the use of being wise when death comes all?

1. James, 1:1-12, A Short's Guide, Translation of Epistle
2. 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th, 27th, 28th, 29th, 30th, 31st, 32nd, 33rd, 34th, 35th, 36th, 37th, 38th, 39th, 40th, 41st, 42nd, 43rd, 44th, 45th, 46th, 47th, 48th, 49th, 50th, 51st, 52nd, 53rd, 54th, 55th, 56th, 57th, 58th, 59th, 60th, 61st, 62nd, 63rd, 64th, 65th, 66th, 67th, 68th, 69th, 70th, 71st, 72nd, 73rd, 74th, 75th, 76th, 77th, 78th, 79th, 80th, 81st, 82nd, 83rd, 84th, 85th, 86th, 87th, 88th, 89th, 90th, 91st, 92nd, 93rd, 94th, 95th, 96th, 97th, 98th, 99th, 100th, 101st, 102nd, 103rd, 104th, 105th, 106th, 107th, 108th, 109th, 110th, 111th, 112th, 113th, 114th, 115th, 116th, 117th, 118th, 119th, 120th, 121st, 122nd, 123rd, 124th, 125th, 126th, 127th, 128th, 129th, 130th, 131st, 132nd, 133rd, 134th, 135th, 136th, 137th, 138th, 139th, 140th, 141st, 142nd, 143rd, 144th, 145th, 146th, 147th, 148th, 149th, 150th, 151st, 152nd, 153rd, 154th, 155th, 156th, 157th, 158th, 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"And yet it seemed to me that perhaps wisdom has an advantage over folly, in so far as light is better than darkness. But then I realized that there is one and the same fate for all; and I reflected that the fate of the fool will overtake me also. Why then should I be over-wise? So I concluded - this, also, is vanity. For of the wise man, as of the fool, there is no permanent record, inasmuch as in the days to come everything is forgotten. And (see) how the wise man dies just as the fool!" I

He thinks perhaps there may be satisfaction in riches but he finds one is never satisfied; his neighbor always has more and the canker of envy eats into his soul. Then, too, as one's wealth increases, his obligations also increase; his establishment becomes larger; his retainers become more numerous; his indulgences impair his health. Life is even less worth living than it was formerly. The thought of death is unbearable to the man of wealth for he cannot take his treasure with him and his son to whom he may leave it may be a waster. If he has no son, death is still more unbearable because then no one knows who will squander the hard earned riches.

"He who loves silver will never have enough
silver
and he who loves a big pile, will have no
profit (of it)-
surely this is vanity.
With the increase of goods, its participants
increase;
And what advantage is it to its owner except
to look at it?"

"And yet it seemed to me that perhaps wisdom
had its advantage over folly, for as I stand
in better than yesterday, but I realized
that there is one and the same fate for all
and I realized that the fate of the fool is
worse than that of the wise. Why then should I be over-
sorrowful? So I concluded - this, alas, is vanity,
for of the wise man, as of the fool, there is
no permanent reward, although as in the case
of some everything is forgotten, and (and)
how the wise man dies just as the fool!"

The Chinese perhaps think that the satisfaction is theirs
but he finds out it never satisfied; his neighbor always
has more and the center of every circle is his soul. Thus,
too, as one's selfish interests, his obligations and in-
terests; his satisfaction becomes larger; his pleasure
becomes more numerous; his indignation against his neighbor;
This is even less worth living than it was formerly. The
thought of death is apprehensive to the man of wealth for
he cannot take his treasure with him and his son to whom
he may leave it may be a scoundrel. If he has no son, wealth
is still more undesirable because then no one knows who
will appropriate the hard earned money.

"The wise lover never will never have enough
and he who loves a fair girl, will have no
wealth, this is vanity.
With the increase of wealth, the selfishness
increases;
and what a tragedy is it to the heart when
a look at it?

Sweet is the sleep of the laborer, whether he
has eaten little or much,
but the satiety of the rich does not permit him
to sleep.

A sore evil that I have seen under the sun, is
riches hoarded by the owner, and when that fortune
is lost through a bad venture, the son begotten by
him has nothing. He cannot carry anything that he
has acquired by his toil away with him. Surely
this as a sore evil, that just as he came, so he
goes. Therefore what profit is it to him that he
toils for the wind and that he spends all his days
in saving and in constant worry and sickness and
distress."1

In spite of this seeming disgust with labor, he believes
the laboring man is the only one who really enjoys life
for to him sleep is sweet.

Even in pleasure he finds merely a chasing after wind;
his most unfortunate experiences evidently coming from
woman. Some commentators think he must have been a bach-
elor or one painfully disillusioned in marriage for in
bitterness of spirit he says,

"And I (also) found out that more bitter than
death is a woman whose mind is (all) snares and
nets, and whose hands are fetters. There is some-
thing else which I sought but never found. Among a
thousand, I did find a real man, but never a decent
woman among all these."2

Of all vain things to him, woman is the most vain and
empty.

In his most pessimistic mood, he looks at life ,

1. Jastrow, M. A Gentle Cynic, Translation of Ecclesiastes
p. 218-219
2. Ibid. p.226

questioning the worthwhileness of struggling against oppression; death, indeed, seems preferable to life.

"And once more I considered all the oppressions practiced under the sun, and Oh, the tears of the oppressed without any one to console them, and the violence of their oppressors with no comforter in sight! And I praised those long since dead more than those still living; and better than both is the one that has not yet been born, inasmuch as he has not seen the evil happening under the sun. "I

After all men are as beasts; both come to the same end.

"And furthermore, I saw under the sun in the place of justice wickedness, and where the righteous should have been the wicked was. (And) I reflected that God (permits) in the case of children of men to test them and to show that they are - beasts. For the fate of the children of men and the fate of the beast is the same. As this one dies, so is the death of that, and there is the same spirit to all. Man has no advantage over the beast, for all is vanity. All go to one place. All are of the dust and all return to dust. Who knows whether the spirit of the children of men mounts up and the spirit of the beast goes down?"²

"Since there is a common fate to all, to the righteous and to the wicked, to the good and to the bad,-----as to the virtuous so to the sinner, - ----- this is the worst evil among all the things that happen under the sun, that there should be one fate to all, and that the mind of the children of men is full of evil and of foolish thoughts while they live and after that-to the dead(they go)"³

Like most people who enjoy pessimistic moods Koheleth nevertheless prefers life to death saying,

"Yet there is at least some assurance to the one who is classed with the living, for as a living

I. Jastrow, M. A Gentle Cynic, A Translation of Ecclesiastes
p.213

2. Ibid. P.212

questioning the rationality of attempting to live
 peacefully, death, however, is preferable to life.

"And once more I considered all the opposi-
 tions that were under the sun, and the heart
 of the oppressed without any one to relieve
 them, and the violence of their oppressors with
 no constraint is laid. And I said, these long
 years have been thus: still living, and
 better than death is the fact that we yet
 hear him, inasmuch as he has not seen the evil
 wrought upon the son. "I

After all this, as he passed, both came to the same end.

"The Lord, I saw under the sun in the
 place of justice wickedness, and where the right-
 eous should have been the wicked was. (And) I
 reflected that God (justified) in the case of this
 son of man to state them and to know that they
 are - because. For the fate of the children of
 man and the fate of the beast is the same. As
 this one dies, so is the death of that, and there
 is the same spirit in all. How can we advantage
 over the beast, for all is vanity. All go to
 one place. All are of the dust and all return
 to dust. For I know neither the spirit of the
 children of men nor again the spirit of the
 beast goes thither.

"Since there is a common fate to all, let
 the righteous and the wicked, let the good
 and the bad, ----- as to the witness to
 the witness, ----- this is the whole end
 among all the things that happen under the sun,
 that there should be one fate to all, and that
 the mind of the children of men be full of evil
 and of foolish thoughts while they live and
 after that is the vanity of life.

Let man eat and drink and enjoy himself in his
 days, for this is his portion in his life, saying,

"Yet there is at least some assurance to the one
 who is blessed with the living, for as a living

dog, he is better off than a dead lion. Since the living (at least) know that they will die, whereas the dead know absolutely nothing. Nor is there any remembrance of them, for their memory is forgotten. Aye, their love as their hate and jealousy is utterly lost, and they have no further share forever in all that happens under the sun."1

In fact he sees eternity as absolute darkness, annihilation.

However, the above is only one side of Koheleth's nature for with all these dark pictures brought out by his vain searching after wisdom we find a joyous refrain breaking out over and over again with here and there bits of worldly philosophy thrown in. After bemoaning the fact that after one has labored a life time to accumulate riches, he must depart from life as naked as he came into life, and that all his days are darkness, sore vexed with sickness and wrath, he comes to this happy conclusion.

"Therefore, it seems to me the thing that is good and proper is to eat, drink, and to have a good time with all one's toil under the sun during the span of life which God has allotted to one, for that is his portion. Every man to whom God has given riches and possessions and who has also the power to enjoy it and to take his portion and to be happy in his toil - this is the gift of God. For he should remember that life is short and that God approves of joy."2

And again after seeing the righteous suffer while the wicked prosper, his buoyant spirit breaks forth.

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1. Jastrow, M. A Gentle Cynic, A Translation of Ecclesiastes
p.231
2. Ibid. p. 219

dog, he is better off than a dead lion. But
the living (at least) know that they will die,
whereas the dead know absolutely nothing. For as
long as we remember of them, for their memory
is forgotten. Yes, their love is their pain and
sorrow is utterly lost, and they have no for-
getfulness forever in all their happiness under the
sun."

In fact he sees eternally as absolute darkness, unending-

tion.

However, the above is only one side of Kierkegaard's re-
sponse for all these dark pictures presented out to him
when searching after wisdom as if it were a joyful pursuit
breaking out over and over again with him and those like
of worldly philosophy turned in. After examining the fact
that after one has looked a little like an ascetic
richer, he must depart from life as naked as he came into
it, and that all his efforts, labors, and years, with
sickness and death, he comes to this happy conclusion:

"Therefore, it seems to me the thing that is
good and proper is to eat, drink, and to have a
good time with all one's soul under the sun during
the span of life which God has allotted to me, for
that is his portion. I will not be wise as the
giving of him and his possessions and who has also the
power to enjoy it and to keep his portion and to
be happy in his life - this is the gift of God.
For he knows that this life is short and that
God approves of joy."

and again after seeing the righteous suffer while the sin-

ners prosper, his honest spirit breaks forth.

I. Kierkegaard, A Danish Mystic, a Translation of Johannes

W. 1913, p. 210

"Therefore go, eat thy bread with joy,
And drink thy wine with a merry heart,
For God has already given his approval to
thy deeds.

At all times be thy garments white,
And let oil not be lacking for thy head.
Enjoy life with the woman of thy love,
All the days of thy vain life,
Which God has given thee under the sun,
for that is thy portion in life, and the compensa-
tion for thy toil under the sun. Whatever thou
canst afford with thy substance do, for there is
no activity, or reckoning, or knowledge, and no
wisdom in Sheol, whither thou goest."I

He pretends to hate life at times but that is only a mood,
for we hear him singing to youth, "Light is sweet", giving
some advice on how to enjoy life. Then follows one of the
most beautiful descriptions of old age and death that is to
be found in all literature.

Light is sweet,
And it is pleasant for the eyes to see the sun.
Though a man live many years,
Let him be happy throughout.
And remember the days of darkness,
For they will be many.
Whatever is coming is vanity.
Rejoice, O young man in thy youth,
And be happy in the days of thy young vigor!
And follow the inclinations of thy mind,
And the sight of thine eyes!
Put away trouble from thy mind,
Before the evil days come on,
And the years approach of which thou shalt say,
'I have no pleasure in them.'
Before the sun is darkened and the clouds
return after the rain,
The day when the guardians of the house tremble,
And the strong men are bent.
And the grinding maidens cease for they are few;
And the peering ladies (who look out) through
the windows grow dim.

And the doors are closed to the street.
 When the sound of the mill is low,
 And one rises at the twittering of the birds;
 And all the daughters of song lie prostrate.
 One is afraid of a height,
 And terror is on the road.
 And the almond tree blossoms,
 And the grasshopper is burdensome,
 And the caper berry becomes ineffectual.
 Before the silver cord is snapped
 And the golden bowl is broken.
 And the jar is shattered at the spring,
 And the wheel is broken at the cistern.
 When man goes to his eternal house;
 And the wailers go about the street.
 And the dust returns to the earth as it was.
 All is vanity."¹

His years of life have taught him moderate enjoyment in all things; not to labor for mere possession, but to enjoy possession; to rejoice in one's youth, but to prepare for old age; not to try to change the world, but to enjoy it while one is here, because the hereafter is all unknown. For a man living in a war-torn country, among people who had vague ideas of God and eternity, his view of life is not pessimistic nor is it licentious; it is, rather, wholesomely practical.

It is easy to understand how Luther felt Koheleth led E. Estimates of him from the monastery while Jerome was equally sure it led Koheleth. to the monastery; how Pascal found scepticism and Tolstoy Epicureanism; one may find whatever he brings to the book. "Koheleth," says Genung, "instead of waiting for heaven, or getting it built on some crude, sensual plan, is making

¹. Jastrow, M., A Gentle Cynic, A Translation of Ecclesiastes, p. 237-240.

heaven every day, secreting it , as it were."^I Havelock Ellis makes this comment. "The thing that has been is the thing that will be again; if we realize that, we may avoid many of the disillusionings, miseries, and anxieties that forever accompany the throes of new birth. Set your shoulder joyously to the world's wheel; you may spare yourself some unhappiness, if, beforehand, you slip the Book of Ecclesiastes beneath your arm."²

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1. Forbush, W., Ecclesiastes in the Metre of Omar, p.13
 2. New Century Bible, p.224

III

OMAR KHAYYÁM

It seems perfectly natural to turn from Koheleth to Omar Khayyám because the two men, separated by centuries are nevertheless much the same in spirit, forever seeking, never finding, although Omar seems the more despondent and consequently the more determined to make the most of the present. William B. Forbush believes the Persian Omar offers the closest analogies to this Hebrew poet philosopher: both study life, "the things that are done under the sun"; each has the view, not of the idealist, smiling, vague and voluble, but of those who will not blink nor be blind, who care nothing for tradition or authority.¹ Whinfield, a student of Omar, compares them thus, "The manner in which the serious Hebrew handles these matters is very different from the levity and flippancy of the volatile Persian but it can hardly be denied that the Ecclesiast and Omar resemble one another in the double and contradictory nature of their practical conclusions."² Over and over again the commentators on Ecclesiast-

A. Comparison
between
Koheleth and
Omar.

1. Forbush, W. B., Ecclesiastes in the Metre of Omar, p. 6.

2. Dole, N. H., Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám, p. 440.

tes refer to Omar as the best interpreter of certain passages and yet Koheleth's position is considered intermediate in relation to solving the world problem which Reason finds itself impotent to solve, while Omar has yielded to fatalism.¹ Andrew Lang in his appreciation of Omar has aptly given the reason why both are appreciated today. "The great charm of all ancient literature, one often thinks, is the finding ourselves in the past. It is as if the fable of repeated and recurring lives were true; as if in the faith, or unbelief, or merriment, or despair, or courage, or cowardice of men long dead, we heard the echoes of our own thoughts, and the beating of hearts that were once our own." Then in speaking of Omar Khayyam he says, "This may explain, in part, the popularity today of Omar Khayyám, the Poet-Astronomer of Persia. . . . He lived in the Ages of Faith -- Faith, Christian or Moslem -- and lo, he says after the Greeks all that the Greeks said of saddest: the most resigned reflections of Marcus Aurelius rise to his lips, and he repeats long before our day, the words of melancholy or of tolerance which now are most commonplace. That is why we listen, because the familiar sayings come on the wings of a strange music from a strange place -- from the lips of Omar, from

1. Dole, N. H., *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*, Intro. p. lxviii, Plumtre's criticism.

the other to show on the last interpreter of certain pas-
 sages and yet Spalding's position is considered in-
 adequate in relation to solving the world problem which
 Hanson finds itself ignorant to solve, while Dean has
 yielded to Spalding. Andrew Lang in his appreciation of
 Dean has said given the reason why both are appreciated
 today. "The great charm of all ancient literature, and
 often indeed, in the thinking ourselves in the past, is
 as if the fable of repeated and recurring lives were
 true; as if the faith, or unbelief, or sentiment, or
 action, or courage, or sacrifice of our long dead, we
 heard the echoes of our own thoughts, and the beating of
 hearts that were once our own." Then in speaking of Dean
 Langman he says, "This may explain, in part, the popular-
 ity today of Dean Langman, the Post-Apostle of Britain."
 . . . He lives in the face of faith -- faith, Christian
 or heathen -- and so, he says after the Greek and Latin
 Greek said of nobility: the most wonderful revelation of
 human destiny lies in his life, and the reason for his be-
 lieving that, the words of melancholy or of tolerance
 which was the most commonplace. That is why we listen, be-
 cause the English saying goes on the wings of a strange
 music from a strange place -- from the lips of Dean, from
 the lips of Dean Langman, Intro. p. 100.
 Langman's Criticism.

the City of the Desert."¹

As Koheleth has been variously interpreted by various individuals, so Omar has been called everything from debauchee to saint. J. B. Nichols, a careful student of Omar insists he was a Sufi; his addresses to his mistress being in reality prayers to the Divinity, intoxication of the wine cup, absorption into divine contemplation.² Garner, on the other hand, maintains he drank wine as he sang of it and his morals were little, if at all, in advance of his age and country. He was a skeptic regarding creeds, tearing down yet offering nothing better, an agnostic and a scoffer. His wine, women and song were real.³ Professor Cowell, who introduces Fitzgerald to Omar's poetry, takes still another point of view. "He turns in these quatrains from his science and astronomy to drown thought in the passing moments' pleasures; he seems to forget his better self in his temporary Epicurean disguise."⁴ Charles Pickering makes him the mouth-piece of modern pessimism,⁵ while Charles Swinburne believes he appeals to the modern admirers because he gives utterance to their own "half-melancholy, half-jocular, but wholly serene

B. Various
opinions
about Omar.

1. Fitzgerald, E., The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám, Foreword by Talcott Williams, p. 1.
2. Dole, N. H., Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám, Intro., p. ixv.
3. Garner, J. L., The Stanzas of Omar Khayyám, p. 1.
4. Dole, N. H., Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám, Intro. xxiii.
5. Ibid., Intro. xxix.

and trustful views of life and of the future."¹ Talcott Williams fails to see the longing, questing heart when he has Omar see "life as simple as its passions and the astronomer himself with naught between his eyes and the stars but the clear air, and between man and maid but desire."²

Much of the above interpretation is due to the individual dispositions of the writers and to lack of understanding as to who and what Omar Khayyám really was. Of all the critics of Omar J. K. M. Shirazi seems most familiar with Persian history and language. While many believe "Khayyám" to be a trade name, meaning "Tent-maker", taken from Omar's and his father's trade,³ Shirazi says it is an old family name from the Arabic, Omar's ancestors having been Arabs who gave up the nomadic life, settling in Persia. Had his father been a tent-maker, the son would never have had an opportunity to study under the great teachers and while Omar is mentioned by an historian in the fourteenth century as a teacher, philosopher, mathematician, astronomer, and author of incomparable verses, there is no mention of him as a tent-maker.⁴ Garner considers it merely a pseudonym.⁵ In any case,

C. His life and times as they influenced his point of view.

1. Dole, N. H., *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*, Intro. cxxiv.
2. Fitzgerald, E., *The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*, Foreword by Talcott Williams, p. xx.
3. Fitzgerald, E., *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*, p. 53.
4. *Life of Omar Al-Khayyám*, p. 62.
5. *The Stanzas of Omar Khayyám*, 2nd edition, p. 18.

and limited view of life and of the future. At the
cost William fails to see the tragedy, suffering heart
when he has seen the life as it is, and the
the astronomer himself with night between his eyes and
the stars but the clear air, and between man and man but
nothing.

Each of the above interpretations is due to the in-
dividual disposition of the witness and to lack of witness-
standing as to who and what Omar Khayyam really was. Of
all the critics of Omar Khayyam, the Oriental seems most fa-
miliar with Persian history and language. While many be-
lieve Khayyam to be a trade name, meaning "fort-night",
taken from Omar's and his father's trade, Oriental says
it is an old family name from the Arabs, Omar's exes-
sive having been Arabs who gave up the nomadic life,
settling in Persia. But his father was a lamp-maker,
the son would never have had an opportunity to study and
become a poet and while Omar is mentioned by an
historian in the fourteenth century as a technician, scholar-
poet, mathematician, astronomer, and author of lamp-maker-
like verses, there is no mention of him as a poet-scholar.
Further, as Khayyam is merely a pseudonym, in any case,
1. Omar Khayyam, *Selected Works of Omar Khayyam*, London, 1915.
2. Khayyam, *Omar Khayyam*, London, 1915.
3. Khayyam, *Omar Khayyam*, London, 1915.
4. Khayyam, *Omar Khayyam*, London, 1915.
5. The *Standard of Omar Khayyam*, 2nd edition, p. 10.

Omar uses it in a whimsical quatrain.

"Khayyám, who stitched the tents of science
Has fallen in Grief's furnace and been suddenly
burned.
The shears of Fate have cut the tent ropes
of his life,
And the broker of Hope, has sold him for
nothing."¹

Born at Naishapúr, Persia, towards the beginning of the eleventh century he had much the same experience as Koheleth, living in a small country, the prey of surrounding states. "Through all the lands that Omar knew, no city was safe, no man dwelt secure and no delicate woman slept unaware of the hideous slavery into which she might be swept on the morrow tending some Tartar camp. Omar could but seek, as Plato once advised, some convenient door-way during the pitiless rain and watch like a spectator the misery of passing humanity in the world's open street swept by the storm of war."² Because of his religious and political enemies it was necessary for him to move from place to place until his friend Nizam ul Mulk made it possible for him to settle down in his birthplace, where he became the most learned man of his day.³ He belonged to a Mohammedan country whose people had been taught complete submission to the Divine Will, all things being ordained of Allah. Determined, almost defiant, at

1. Dole, N. H., *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*, Intro. p. cxxxix.

2. Fitzgerald, E., *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*, Foreword by Talcott Williams, p. xviii.

3. Shirazi, J. K. M., *Life of Omar Al-Khayyám*, p. 58.

times, in his quest for the unknown he was again and again thrown into despair of understanding God and the Universe, his agnosticism always modified by Mohammedanism. His religion taught him Paradise would satisfy all the longings of the flesh: his scientific mind could not grasp the unknown future, so he sought forgetfulness in the present delight of the senses.¹ As in Koheleth there is the constant conflict of soul, at one moment the baffled philosopher searching for truth, defiantly demanding explanation of the unknown, the next drowning in the wine cup the pain of a limited knowledge.

"Myself when young did eagerly frequent
 Doctor and Saint, and heard great
 argument
 About it and about; but evermore
 Came out by the same door where in
 I went.

With them the seed of Wisdom did I
 sow,
 And with mine own hand wrought to
 make it grow;
 And this was all the Harvest that I
 reap'd ---
 "I came like Water, and like Wind I
 go."

Into this Universe, and Why not
 knowing
 Nor Whence, like Water willy-nilly
 flowing;
 And out of it, as Wind along the
 Waste,

1. Shirazi, J. K. M., Life of Omar Al-Khayyām, p. 77.

I know not Whither, willy-nilly blowing.

Up from Earth's Centre through the
Seventh Gate
I rose, and on the Throne of Saturn
sate,
And many a Knot unravel'd by the
Road;
But not the Master-knot of Human Fate.
Fate.

There was the Door to which I found
no Key;
There was the Veil through which I
might not see;
Some little talk awhile of ME and
THEE
There was --- and then no more of
THEE and ME.

Then to the Lip of this poor earthen
Urn
I lean'd, the Secret of my Life to
learn;
And Lip to Lip it murmur'd ---
"While you live,
Drink! --- for, once dead, you never
shall return."¹

That he was a common debauchee is inconceivable because his religion forbade all intoxicating liquors. To be sure he defied his religion often in his verses, mocking Allah and his priests, and although he indulged, it must have been moderately else in his old age he never could have held the place of honored teacher, respected by his colleagues and beloved by his disciples. As he watched man's inhumanity to man, and God's apparent unconcern, he could not reconcile his religious teachings with his science.

1. Fitzgerald, E., Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám, ^{and} Stanzas xxvii, xxviii, xxix, xxxi, xxxii, xxxv.

In the Koran God is omnipotent, cruel, unfeeling, ready to visit with punishment the miserable beings for whose existence He is Himself responsible. The Creator of Good and Evil, He puts sin in the way of mankind, makes man weak and then punishes him.¹ It was such a background that called forth that defiant cry.

"What! out of senseless Nothing to
 provoke
 A conscious Something to resent the
 yoke
 Of unpermitted Pleasure, under pain
 Of Everlasting Penalties, if broke!

What! from his helpless Creature be
 repaid
 Pure God for what he lent him dross-
 allay'd ---
 Sue for a Debt we never did con-
 tract
 And cannot answer --- Oh the sorry
 trade!

Oh Thou, who didst with pitfall and
 with gin
 Beset the Road I was to wander in,
 Thou wilt not with Predestin'd Evil
 round
 Enmesh, and then impute my Fall to
 Sin!

Oh Thou, who Man of baser Earth
 didst make,
 And ev'n with Paradise devise the
 Snake:
 For all the Sin wherewith the Face
 of Man
 Is blacken'd --- Man's forgiveness give
 --- and take!"²

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1. Shirazi, J. K. M., Life of Omar Al-Khayyám, p. 85.
 2. Fitzgerald, E., Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám, Stanzas
 LXXVIII-LXXXI, inclusive.

In the larger God is omnipotent, eternal, unchangeable, ready
 to visit with punishment the miserable beings for whose
 salvation He is Himself responsible. The Governor of Good
 and Evil, He puts sin in the way of mankind, takes man
 weak and then punishes him. It was such a background
 that called forth that brilliant cry.

"What! out of heavenly dwelling to
 A common street? No, no, no!
 Of unnumbered thousands, what pain
 Of everlasting torment, it needs!
 What! from his holy place descend he
 To dwell with man? No, no, no!
 For what he does he does his own
 Will, and he never will not
 And cannot answer -- Oh the horror
 Of this!

Oh thou, who didst with pistols and
 with gun
 Beset the Road I was to wander in,
 Thou wilt not with Thyself's will
 round
 Remorse, and then let me go I do
 Will!

Oh thou, who man of power Earth
 didst make,
 And with Thyself's justice the
 Shame:
 For all the sin wherewith the Face
 of Man
 is blacken'd -- -- Man's forgiveness give
 -- and take!

I. Chalmers, J. E. W., Life of David Livingstone, p. 22.
 J. W. F. W., History of Great Britain, p. 22.
 J. W. F. W., History of Great Britain, p. 22.

There have been many who have tried to translate D. Translations
Omar not only into English, but into various other lan- and
guages. In fact, no other book save the Bible has been Manuscripts.
translated into so many languages and passed through so
many editions. Of all the English translations, and
there are many, that of Edward Fitzgerald has never been
surpassed. "A translation pure and simple it is not, but
a translation in the most classic sense of the term it un-
doubtedly is. It is the work of a poet inspired by the
work of a poet; not a copy, but a reproduction; not a
translation, but the redelivery of a poetic inspiration."¹
McCarthy in his translation has four hundred sixty-six
quatrains, and Whinfield five hundred while Fitzgerald has
only one hundred one, but Fitzgerald seems to have expressed
in his fewer quatrains all that is best in the others. A-
gain we have to compare Omar and Koheleth. The manuscripts
of Omar are so rare and have been so mutilated and anno-
tated it is difficult to determine just what is his and
what is not. One of the finest manuscripts is in Calcutta
and has affixed this quatrain supposed to have been given
to Omar's mother when he appeared to her after his death.

"Oh, Thou who burnist in Heart of those
who burn
In Hell, whose fires thyself shall feed
in turn;

1. Nichols, H. S., Some Sidelights on Edward Fitzgerald's
poem, p. 5.

There have been many who have tried to translate the Bible into English, but none have been successful. In fact, no other book has been translated so many languages and passed through so many editions. Of all the English translations, and there are many, that of Edward Fitzgerald has never been surpassed. "A translation pure and simple it is not, but a translation in the most classic sense of the term it is undoubtedly. It is the work of a poet inspired by the work of a poet; not a copy, but a re-creation; not a translation, but the rebirth of a poetic inspiration."

McCarthy in his translation has four hundred sixty-six questions, and Fitzgerald five hundred while Fitzgerald has only one hundred and one. Fitzgerald seems to have expressed in his twenty questions all that is best in the poem. A gain we have to compare Gaster and Fitzgerald. The manuscripts of Gaster are so rare and have been so mutilated and mangled that it is difficult to determine just what he said and what is not. One of the finest manuscripts in the University of Oxford which this question was supposed to have been given to Gaster's mother when he appeared to her after his death.

Now, then who burned in Hell of those who burn in Hell, whose lives have been spared in turn?

J. Nicholas, M. A., Vice-Chancellor of Edward Fitzgerald's poem, p. 2.

How long be crying, 'Mercy on them, God!'
 Why, who art Thou to teach and He
 to learn."¹

Very evidently this is an addition and there are doubtless many more. It, therefore, seems wisest to select only the best and ascribe them to Omar. Each quatrain is a perfect gem in itself, as someone has said, "a perfect pearl in a string of pearls;" having nothing necessarily in common with what proceeds or follows save, in the Persian, they must come in alphabetical order. It is generally believed they were written at various times, in various moods from youth to old age; gay and grave, hope and despair, follow in rapid succession as, in fact, they do in life itself.

We can imagine the scientist, expert in reading the stars, the man delighting in solving algebraic problems, trying to solve the most baffling of all problems, that of life itself. He tries to find God, feeling there must be some divine force in the Universe and yet life is so brief, true and false, so hard to distinguish, one almost catches a glimpse of Him only to find darkness, which God, Himself contrives. Oh! What's the use! Today you are you; tomorrow you shall be you no more, so

"Waste not your Hour, nor in the vain
 pursuit

1. Dole, N. H., Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám, Intro. CXLVII.

Of This and That/endeavour and dis-
 pute;
 Better be jocund with the fruitful
 Grape
 Than sadden after none, or bitter,
 Fruit."¹

The wine brings only temporary forgetfulness of his problem for we hear him again trying to understand God's relation to man. He thinks of God as the "Master of the Show" and mankind "a moving row of magic Shadow-shapes that come and go", or

"But helpless Pieces of the Game He
 plays
 Upon his Chequer-board of Nights and
 Days:
 Hither and thither moves, and checks,
 and slays,
 And one by one back in the Closet
 lays.

The Ball no question makes of Ayes
 Noes,
 But Here or There as strikes the Player
 goes;
 And He that toss'd you down into
 the Field,
He knows about it all -- HE knows --
HE knows!"²

At another time he thinks of God as the potter shaping the clay. Does not the story tell "Of such a clod of saturated earth cast by the Maker into Human mould!"³ He hears some anguished soul murmur "Gently, Brother, gently pray."⁴ As he looks at mankind, misshapen often

1. Fitzgerald, E., Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám,^{4th ed.} Stanza LIV.
 2. Ibid., Stanzas LXIX, LXX.
 3. Ibid., Stanza XXXVIII.
 4. Ibid., Stanza XXXVII.

in body and soul, crushed by misfortune, helpless in the face of great calamities, suffering through no fault of his own, he imagines the pots talking.

"Said one among them --- "Surely not
in vain
My substance of the common Earth
was ta'en
And to this Figure moulded, to be
broke,
Or trampled back to shapeless Earth
again."

Then said a Second --- "Ne'er a pee-
vish Boy
Would break the Bowl from which he
drank in joy;
And He that with his hand the Ves-
sel made
Will surely not in after Wrath destroy."

After a momentary silence spake
Some Vessel of a more ungainly make;
"They sneer at me for leaning all
awry:
What! did the Hand then of the Potter
shake?"

"Why," said another, "Some there
are who tell
Of one who threatens he will toss to
Hell
The luckless Pots he marr'd in mak-
ing --- Pish!
He's a Good Fellow, and 'twill all be
well."¹

He seeks God in the temple only to find cold ritual and hypocrisy. Oh! better to catch one flash of Him in the tavern than to lose him outright in the temple.² (By tavern is not meant the Occidental drinking house, but

1. Fitzgerald, E., Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám, ^{used.} Stanzas LXXXIV, LXXXV, LXXXVI, LXXXVIII.

2. Ibid., Stanza LXXVII.

in body and soul, stretched by misfortune, helpless in the
face of great calamities, and then through no fault of
his own, he imagines the gods helping.

"Said one among them --- 'Surely not
in vain
My worship of the common Earth
was taken
And to this figure moulded, to be
Prose,
Of legends back to legends Earth
again."

Then said a second --- 'Not a few
with I
Wrote upon the host from which is
drawn in joy;
And he that with his hand has
not made
Will surely not be after Earth's company."

After a momentary silence again
Some Vespers of a more vaguely said;
"They speak of me for leaving all
away;
What! did the hand then of the foster
father?"

"No," said another, "these things
are told
Of one who thought he will lose to
Hell
The longest loss he ever's in and
and --- I said
No! a good fellow, and 'twill all be
well."

So says he in the temple only to find cold ritual and
hypocrisy. But, better to reach one flesh of his in the
furnace than to lose his outcast in the temple. (p)

There is not much of the sentimental drinking man, but
I. B. ... of ...
...
...

the Oriental rose garden, where beauty is supreme.)
 Sometimes he falls into deepest despair, feeling Fate is
 all powerful and mankind utterly helpless, therefore
 drink and forget.

"The Moving Finger writes; and, hav-
 ing writ,
 Moves on: nor all your Piety nor
 Wit
 Shall lure it back to cancel half a
 Line,
 Nor all your Tears wash out a Word
 of it.

And that inverted Bowl they call the
 Sky,
 Whereunder crawling coop'd we live
 and die,
 Lift not your hands to It for help ---
 for it
 As impotently moves as you or I.

With Earth's first Clay They did the
 Last Man knead,
 And there of the Last Harvest sow'd
 the Seed:
 And the first Morning of Creation
 wrote
 What the Last Dawn of Reckoning
 shall read.

YESTERDAY This Day's Madness did
 prepare;
 TO-MORROW'S Silence, Triumph, or
 Despair:
 Drink! for you know not whence
 you came, nor why:
 Drink! for you know not why you go,
 nor where."¹

He can predict where certain stars will be years hence,

1. Fitzgerald, E., Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám, Stanzas
 LXXI-LXXIV, inclusive.

the distant rose garden, where beauty is
sometimes as false as the deepest beauty, feeling that is
and powerful and making utterly helpless, the
time and forget.

*The Master's finger lifted; and, hav-
ing said,
Haven't you all your life not
Will
Shall I have it back to cancel half a
line,
Not all your tears wash out a word
of it.
And that I have said how they call the
My
Whispering something good's as live
and life
Lift not your hands to if for help --
for it
As I have said, what do you do I.
With Master's finger they did the
last man kneel,
and came of the last Master's
the good;
and the first Master at creation
was
What the last Master of humanity
shall read.
NIGHTMARE This is a warning to
present;
TO-MORROW'S silence, Trump, at
Gospel;
Think! for you know not what
you seek, nor why;
Think! for you know not why you do,
not where, at

He can predict what certain stars will be years hence,
I. William, W. Wright of New York, New York
1881-1882, 1883-1884.

but the human soul, so much more real than any star,
 where will it be, what becomes of it after death? the
 question that tortured Koheleth and still tortures man-
 kind.

"For some we loved, the loveliest and
 the best
 That from his Vintage rolling Time
 has prest,
 Have drunk their Cup a Round or
 two before,
 And one by one crept silently to rest.

And we that now make merry in the
 Room
 They left, and Summer dresses in new
 bloom,
 Ourselves must we beneath the
 Couch of Earth
 Descend --- ourselves to make a Couch
 --- for whom?

Ah, make the most of what we yet
 may spend,
 Before we too into the Dust descend;
 Dust into Dust, and under Dust, to
 lie,
 Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer,
 and --- sans End!

Alike for those who for TO-DAY pre-
 pare,
 And those that after some TO-MORROW
 stare,
 A Muezzin from the Tower of
 Darkness cries,
 "Fools! your Reward is ^{at the} ~~is~~ either Here
 nor There."¹

We are reminded of Koheleth's generation following genera-
 tion unknowing of all mankind has done, their striving be-

1. Fitzgerald, E., Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám, Stanzas
 XXII-XXV, inclusive.

But the human soul, no more alive than any other,
where will it be, that becomes of it after death? The
question that tormented Kierkegaard and still torments man-

kind.

"For some we loved, the innocent and
the just,
That time the Virgin's calling came,
and before,
and after,
and one by one swept silently to rest,
and we that were once merry in the
dance,
They fall, and danger comes in now,
floods,
Ourselves and we beneath the
cushion of earth
Deserted --- ourselves no more a breath
--- for whom?

Oh, make the most of what we get
and before,
Before we are laid in the dust beneath;
Hush! hush! hush! and under that, to
lie,
Hush! hush! hush! hush! hush!
and --- and hush!

Alas for those who live to-day and
to-morrow,
and those that after come to-morrow
and those that
A minute from the tower of
darkness comes,
"So! you have left behind you here
at home."

It is recorded of Kierkegaard's conversation following Kierkegaard's
tion mentioning of all mankind was gone, their living co-
llective
I. Kierkegaard, S. Kierkegaard, of Copenhagen, Denmark
KUI-XIV, inclusive.

ing merely after wind. Omar has Saints and Sages scattered, their mouths stopped with dust.¹ He comes to the conclusion, "I came like Water, and like Wind I go." Such reasoning exasperates his soul and he revolts.

"What, without asking, hither hurried
Whence?
 And, without asking, Whither hurried
 hence!
 Oh, many a Cup of this forbidden
 Wine
 Must drown the memory of that insolence!"²

To be sure there are myriads of human beings, is the human soul so priceless after all?

"And fear not lest Existence closing
 your
 Account, and mine, should know the
 like no more;
 The eternal Sâkî from that Bowl
 has pour'd
 Millions of Bubbles like us, and will
 pour.

When You and I behind the Veil are
 past,
 Oh, but the long, long while the
 World shall last,
 Which of our Coming and Departure
 heeds
 As the Sea's self should heed a pebble
 cast.

A Moment's Halt --- a momentary
 taste
 Of BEING from the Well amid the
 Waste ---
 And Lo! --- the phantom Caravan
 has reach'd
 The NOTHING it set out from --- Oh,
 make haste!"³

1. Fitzgerald, E., Rubâiyât of Omar Khayyâm, Stanza XXVI. *aria.*

2. Ibid., Stanza XXX.

3. Ibid., Stanzas XLVI-XLVIII, inclusive.

ing easily after him. Over the balcony and across the
fence, their mother stepped with ease. He comes to the
conclusion, "I am like water, and like wind I go."

Such reasoning exasperates his soul and he replies:

"What, without asking, kinder answers

answers?

And, without asking, whether further

answers!

Oh, many a Cup of this forbidden

Wine

Must drown the memory of that in-

-solence!"

To be sure there are vestiges of human beings, is the

human soul no witness after all?

"And then not last Existence closing

your

account, and mine, should know the

life no more;

The eternal Soul from that hour

has gone!

Millions of Spirits live on, and still

gone.

When you and I begin the Veil are

past,

Oh, but the long, long, while the

World shall last,

Which of our Cousins and Neph-

ews needs

As the Soul's self should heed a pebble

cast.

A Mother's Hilt --- a messenger

last

Of Hilt from the Well and the

Wells ---

and so! --- the phantom Geyser

has passed!

The Hilted it set out from --- Oh,

make haste!"

1. Wittgenstein, Tractatus at Cambridge, London 1918.
2. Ibid., Stanzas XXX.
3. Ibid., Stanzas XLV-XLVII, conclusive.

To be able to unravel many a "Knot by the Road", but to be forever baffled by the "Master Knot of Human Fate" brings him to the realization of Koheleth that eternity is forever hidden from the knowledge of man.

"Earth could not answer; nor the Seas
that mourn
In flowing Purple, of their Lord for-
lorn;
Nor rolling Heaven, with all his
Signs reveal'd
And hidden by the sleeve of Night and
Morn."¹

so again he seeks release from his strivings in the wine cup.

At times death to him seems to end all. "Once dead, you never shall return."² "To Earth invert you --- like an empty cup."³ Yet he has no fear of death and his keen mind cannot accept complete annihilation as the finale of life. He receives truly a flash of the divine when he sings,

"And if the Wine you drink, the Lip
you press,
End in what All begins and ends in ---
Yes;
Think then you are TO-DAY what
YESTERDAY
You were --- TO-MORROW you shall
not be less.

So when the Angel of the darker
Drink

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1. Fitzgerald, E., Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám, Stanza XXXIII.
2. Ibid., Stanza XXXV.
3. Ibid., Stanza XL.

to be able to answer many a "knot by the knot", but to
be forever baffled by the "knots that are not knots"
which are to the realization of the fact that
is forever hidden from the knowledge of man.

"Earth could not answer; nor the sea
In flowing tides, of their love for-
low;
Nor rolling Heavens, with all their
signs thereof,
And hidden by the sleeve of Night and
Morn."

so again he seeks release from his strivings in the void.

At times death to him seems to end all. "When death
you never shall return." "To Earth I have said -- like
an empty cup." Yet he has no fear of death and his heart
mind cannot accept complete annihilation as the light of
life. He receives truly a flash of the divine when he

"And if the wine you drink, the life
you press,
And if what all begins and ends in --
Yes;
Think that you are TO-DAY what
TO-MORROW you shall
not be again."

So when the Angel of the darkest
night

- 1. Platonism, W. R. Inge, of Great Britain, 1881.
- 2. Inge, W. R. Inge, 1881.
- 3. Inge, W. R. Inge, 1881.

At last shall find you by the river-
brink,
And, offering his Cup, invite your
Soul
Forth to your Lips to quaff --- you
shall not shrink.

Why, if the Soul can fling the Dust
aside,
And naked on the Air of Heaven ride,
Were't not a Shame --- were't not a
Shame for him
In this clay carcase crippled to abide?

'Tis but a Tent where takes his one
day's rest
A Sultan to the realm of Death ad-
drest;
The Sultan rises, and the dark Fer-
rash
Strikes, and prepares it for another
Guest."¹

Again and again, as did Koheleth, he bids us make
haste to enjoy the present. Why make haste? Life is
brief.

"And, as the Cock crew, those who
stood before
The Tavern shouted --- "Open then
the Door!
You know how little while we have
to stay,
And, once departed, may return no
more."

Come, fill the Cup, and in the fire of
Spring
Your Winter-garment of Repentance
fling;
The Bird of Time has but a little way
To flutter --- and the Bird is on the
Wing.

1. Fitzgerald, E., Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám, Stanzas
XLII-XLV, inclusive.

Whether at Naishapúr or Babylon,
 Whether the Cup with sweet or bitter
 run,
 The Wine of Life keeps oozing
 drop by drop,
 The Leaves of Life keep falling one
 by one.

Oh threats of Hell and Hopes of Para-
 dise!
 One thing at least is certain --- This
 life flies;
 One thing is certain and the rest is
 Lies;
 The Flower that once has blown for
 ever dies."¹

Ambition is too uncertain; glory may never come, and
 if it does, it soon goes.

"Some for the Glories of this World;
 and some
 Sigh for the Prophet's Paradise to
 come;
 Ah, take the Cash, and let the Credit
 go,
 Nor heed the rumble of a distant
 Drum!

The Worldly Hope men set their
 Hearts upon
 Turns Ashes --- or it prospers; and
 anon,
 Like Snow upon the Desert's dusty
 Face,
 Lighting a little hour or two --- was
 gone."²

There are two features of Omar not found in Koheleth,
 the praise of wine and women. The latter exhorts one to
 eat and drink, but he does not exalt wine as the panacea

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1. Fitzgerald, E., Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám, Stanzas
 III, VII, VIII, LXIII.
 2. Ibid., Stanzas XIII, XVI.

of all woes as does Omar.

"You know, my Friends, with what a
brave Carouse
I made a Second Marriage in my
house;
Divorced old barren Reason from
my Bed,
And took the Daughter of the Vine to
Spouse.

And lately, by the Tavern Door
agape,
Came shining through the Dusk an
Angel Shape
Bearing a Vessel on his Shoulder;
and
He bid me taste of it; and 'twas ---
the Grape!

The Grape that can with Logic abso-
lute
The Two-and-Seventy jarring Sects
confute:
The sovereign Alchemist that in a
trice
Life's leaden metal into Gold trans-
mute:

The mighty Mahmud, Allah-breathing
Lord,
That all the misbelieving and black
Horde
Of Fears and Sorrows that infest the
Soul
Scatters before him with his whirlwind
Sword.

Ah, with the Grape my fading Life
provide,
And wash the Body whence the Life
has died,
And lay me, shrouded in the living
Leaf,
By some not unfrequented Garden-side.

And much as Wine has play'd the
 Infidel,
 And robb'd me of my Robe of Honour
 --- Well,
 I wonder often what the Vintners buy
 One-half so precious as the stuff they
 sell."¹

Whereas Koheleth sought in vain for one good woman in a
 thousand, Omar finds temporary contentment in the minis-
 trations of the gracious sáki (the bearer of the wine).

"A Book of Verses underneath the
 Bough,
 A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread ---
 and Thou
 Beside me singing in the Wilderness
 Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow!

Perplexed no more with Human or
 Divine,
 To-morrow's tangle to the winds re-
 sign,
 And lose your fingers in the tresses
 of
 The Cypress-slender Minister of
 Wine."²

Enjoyment of her exquisite beauty however brings back
 the old problems of the Universe, the brevity of life,
 fleeting beauty, and again he gives the haunting cry.

"Yet Ah, that Spring should vanish with
 the Rose!
 That Youth's sweet-scented manu-
 script should close!
 The Nightingale that in the branches
 sang,
 Ah whence, and whither flown again,
 who knows!

-
1. Fitzgerald, E., Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám, Stanzas
 LV, LVIII, LVIX, LX, XCI, XCV.
 2. Ibid., Stanzas XII, XLI.

Would but the Desert of the Fountain
 yield
 One glimpse --- if dimly, yet indeed,
 reveal'd,
 To which the fainting Traveller
 might spring,
 As springs the trampled herbage of the
 field!

Would but some winged Angel ere too
 late
 Arrest the yet unfolded Roll of Fate,
 And make the stern Recorder other-
 wise
 Enregister, or quite obliterate!

Ah Love! could you and I with Him
 conspire
 To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things
 entire,
 Would not we shatter it to bits ---
 and then
 Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's
 desire!"¹

Both Omar and Koheleth express the longings of the human heart, the search for God, the assurance of life eternal. Each, unable to find satisfaction, falls back on the joys of the present, "Carpe diem," as the only reality of which he can be sure. Yet, Koheleth, at least, feels God approves of his pleasure, while Omar, in his baffled soul, mocks the Potter, "whose hand shakes" and who after all, "is a good fellow." Of the two Omar seems the more despairing, the more negative, the more thrown back on the present as the only tangible experience. Perhaps that is why his words are more wistfully poignant.

F. Omar's life-
 view vs.
 Koheleth's.

1. Fitzgerald, E., Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam, 4th Edition, Stanzas XCVI-XCIX, inclusive.

Would you not prefer to be
in the
one place -- as it is, you know
to which the British
at the time
as before the British
1914!

Would you not prefer to be
in the
at the time of the
and the other
also
the British, or other
1914!

At last! I am glad you and I will
to the British, or other
1914!

Both you and I have been
human beings, the British, or other
1914!

IV

ROBERT BROWNING

If one were to accept the life-view of Koheleth or of Omar he could hope for no more satisfaction in existence than either of them found. It seems as if the centuries must produce someone who could answer the honest questionings of such earnest seekers, and to many Robert Browning has proved to be the exponent of buoyant, positive optimism.

A. Exponent
of
optimism.

It should be easy to know all about Browning's life and background, a man living so recently, and yet, of his real, inner life we know little save what is recorded in his poetry. Chesterton begins his Men of Letters essay on Browning by saying, "Of his life, considered as a narrative of facts, there is little or nothing to say. It was a lucid and public, and yet quiet life, which culminated in one great dramatic test of character, and then fell back again into this union of quietness and publicity."¹ Then, after this statement he fills pages with many digressions and few definite facts of the man's life. The

1. Chesterton, G. K., Robert Browning, p. 1.

B. His life
and times
as they
influenced
his point
of view.

ROBERT BROWNING

If one were to accept the life-view of Kierkegaard or A. Dostoevsky of whom he could hope for no more satisfaction in his opinion, those than either of them found. It seems as if the countries must produce someone who could answer the honest questioning of such earnest seekers, and to many Robert Browning has proved to be the exponent of this, sensitive opinion.

It should be easy to know all about Browning's life and background, a man living so recently, and yet, of his inner life we know little save what is recounted in his poetry. Chesterton begins his Men of Letters essay on Browning by saying, "Of his life, considered as a history of facts, there is little or nothing to say. It was a lonely and public, and yet quiet life, which culminated in one great dramatic feat of character, and then fell back again into this quiet of quietness and publicity." Then, after this statement he fills pages with many biographical and few definite facts of the man's life. The

J. Chesterton, G. E., Robert Browning, p. 1.

reason for dearth of material lies in Browning's own attitude toward biography. He had seen what biography could do in Froude's treatment of Carlyle, and despising reminiscences and gossip of the ordinary biography, refused to talk with those who begged for material, simply referring them to his poetry.

"Outside should suffice for evidence.
And who so desires to penetrate
Deeper, must dive by the spirit sense."¹

He was born May 7th, 1812 into a solid, well educated middle class home in London, his father being a clerk of the Bank of England, his mother, a Scotch woman of refinement. Carefully educated by his parents and masters, not only in books but in music and art, the boy was allowed to follow practically any line of learning that appealed to him, making him as a young man remarkably well versed in languages, science, art, and music. Having a comfortable income and desires commensurate with that income he was free from all financial anxiety. Consequently, he felt in duty bound to give back to the world some return for the comforts he had received, beginning early to pay that debt of gratitude, in the coin of poetry. The great romance of his life came when he was thirty-four, in the winning of Elizabeth Barrett, the invalid poetess, much more famous at that time than he.² Mrs. Browning's

1. De Vane, W. C., Browning's Parleyings, Intro. p. xv.

2. Phelps, W. L., Browning How to Know Him, p. 9.

reason for death of material lies in Browning's own
attitude toward biography. He had seen what biography
could do in French's treatment of Carlyle, and recognizing
resistance and quality of the ordinary biography, he
tried to talk with those who begged for material, always
referring back to his poetry.

"Outside should suffice for evidence,
And who no desire in person's
Deeper, great alive by the spirit alone."

He was born May 21, 1833 into a solid, well situated
middle class home in London, his father being a clerk of
the Bank of England, his mother, a Scotch woman of ex-
tinction. Carefully educated by his parents and masters,
not only in books but in music and art, the boy was in-
fused to follow practically any line of learning that ap-
pealed to him, making him a young man remarkably well
versed in languages, science, art, and music. Having a
contemplative interest and serious concentration with that in-
come he was free from all dissipated activity. Unimpaired
by, he felt it only bound to give back to the world some-
thing for the world he had received, beginning early
to pay that debt of gratitude in the form of poetry.

The great romance of his life came when he was thirty-four,
in the spring of Elizabeth Barrett, and finally married,
much more famous at that time than he. Mrs. Browning's

1. The Poet, W. B. Browning: Paraphrase, London, 1877.
2. Poet, W. B. Browning: How to Know Him, p. 2.

exquisite SONNETS FROM THE PORTUGUESE reveal this dramatic, idealistic courtship. Their flight to Italy, the fifteen years of happy companionship and the death of Mrs. Browning are told by Dr. Sharp¹ and other biographers, being a constant source of inspiration and curiosity to the lovers of lovers. In the death of his wife, Browning faced the crisis of his life and met it as a man of his philosophy must. "The crushing grief that came to him in the death of his wife he bore with that Christian resignation of which we hear more often than perhaps we see in experience. For Browning was a Christian, not only in faith but in conduct; it was the main-spring of his art and of his life. There are so many writers whose lives show so painful a contrast with the ideal tone of their written work, that it is refreshing and inspiring to be so certain of Browning; to know that the author of the poems which thrill us was as great in character as he was in genius."¹ Dr. Sharpe maintains, "If the poet had been able to teach in song only what he had learned in suffering, the larger part of his verse would be singularly barren of interest. From first to last everything went well with him, with the exception of a single profound grief. His great faith perhaps was a result of this."² However, there were other keen

1. Phelps, W. L., Browning, How to Know Him, p. 33.

2. Sharp, W., Life of Robert Browning, p. 24.

...the ... from the ...
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... of happy companionship and the death of
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... of their ... that it is ...
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... the author of the poems which ... as great in
... as he was in genius. Dr. ...
... the poet had said this to ... only that
... he had learned in ... the ... of his ...
... would be ... of ...
... last everything went well with him, with the exception
... of a single ... His great faith ...
... a result of this. However, there were other ...

I. ...
... of Robert Browning, p. 24.

disappointments and sorrows. It is true he had no financial cares, but he saw the toil of his heart and mind pass unheeded and unappreciated for years, not gaining a real response from a number of people until he was over fifty years old.¹ Death took his mother and father, who had been not only his parents, but teachers and companions, his wife, whom he loved more than life itself, his friend, Milsand, of whom he said, "I never knew or ever shall know his like among men."² Anxiety for a loved one, sorrow and loneliness he did know, and it was these experiences of the soul that made him akin to mankind. "'Do you care for nature?' a friend once asked him. 'Yes, a great deal,' he answered, 'but for human beings, a great deal more.'"³ He lived in a generation of great men, Carlyle, Tennyson, Ruskin, Matthew Arnold, Darwin, children of a "very strenuous and conscientious age." While others contended among themselves, Browning, alone, had no fear; he welcomed, evidently without the least affectation, all the influences of his day, admiring all the cycle of great men.⁴ His death in December, 1889 drew to a close a life that "was throughout a noble music with a golden ending."⁵

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1. Griggs, E. H., *The Poetry and Philosophy of Robert Browning*, p. 17.
 2. Chesterton, G. K., *Robert Browning*, p. 119.
 3. *Ibid.*, p. 186.
 4. *Ibid.*, p. 55.
 5. Sharp, W., *Life of Robert Browning*, p. 119.

disappointments and sorrows. It is true he had no
 financial ease, but he was the soul of his people and
 kind gaze shone out unobscured for years, and
 holding a real respect for a nation of people until he
 was over fifty years old. Then took his women and
 father, who had been with him his parents, but because
 and congenial, his wife, whom he loved more than life
 itself, his friend, his friend, of whom he said, "I never
 knew or ever shall know the like away from me." And
 for a loved one, sorrow and loneliness he did know, and
 it was these experiences of the soul that made him
 so magnetic. "Who you care for nature," a friend once
 asked him. "Yes, a great deal," he answered, "but for
 human beings, a great deal more." He lived in a great
 state of great men, Carlyle, Emerson, Ruskin, Hawthorne,
 Arnold, Darwin, children of a very religious and con-
 siderable age. While others contended among themselves,
 Browning alone, had no fear, he welcomed, evidently with-
 out the least reservation, all the influences of his day,
 admitting all the good of great men. His death in De-
 cember, 1889 drew to a close a life that was throughout
 a noble music with a golden ending.

1. *Erasmus, A. J., The Poetry and Philosophy of Robert*
Browning, p. 17.
2. *Emerson, C. W., Robert Browning, p. 119.*
3. *Ibid., p. 120.*
4. *Ibid., p. 121.*
5. *Ibid., p. 122.*

Like Koheleth and Omar, he was the product of his time. He "came to us as one coming to his own. There was in good sooth a mansion prepared against his advent. A man is the child of his time, as a great French writer has said. It is a matter often commented upon by students of literature, that great men do not appear at the beginning but rather at the acme of a period."¹ "The Renaissance was a new birth in the intellectual life and the Reformation, a new birth in the religious life of the world," and by the middle of the nineteenth century God as a spirit pervading all things was vaguely felt, but the sense of God as a Personality was practically lost.² Everything was questioned; not only theology, the imperfect armor in which the spirit had been clothed, was attacked, but the very existence of spirit itself was to be questioned.³ Darwin with his startling theory of evolution and Ernest Haeckel's declaration that "God, freedom, and immortality are the three great buttresses of superstition which it is the business of society to destroy"⁴ were met by Browning's

"I spake as I saw
I report as a man may of God's work --
All's love, yet all's law."
---Saul.

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1. Sharp, W., Life of Robert Browning, p. 15.
2. Hermann, E. A. G., The Faith of Robert Browning, pp.3-4.
4. Ibid., p. 18.
3. Clarke, H. A., Browning and His Century, p. 13.

John Ruskin and others. He was the product of his
time. He came to us as one coming to his own. There was
in good society a reaction against his views. A
man as the child of his time, as a great French writer
has said. It is a matter often commented upon by students
of literature, that great men do not appear at the height
of their power at the close of a period. A new period
was a new birth to the intellectual life and the
renaissance, a new birth in the religious life of the
world, and by the middle of the nineteenth century the
as a result everything all things was changed. The
the power of God in a phenomenal way was revealed. The
Everything was questioned; not only theology, the
fact arose in which the spirit had been reborn, was
taught, but the very existence of spirit itself was
questioned. Darwin gave his scientific theory of evolu-
tion and Ernst Haeckel's "Descent of Man" and "The
and immortality and the three great questions of religion
which is the foundation of society, to which
were not by Browning's

"I speak as I see
I speak as a man of God's word --
All's love, yet all's law."
---Browning.

1. Essay, W. H. Rieu of Robert Browning, p. 12.
2. Browning, R. A. B., The Poet of Robert Browning, pp. 2-4.
3. Ibid., p. 12.
4. Ibid., R. A. Browning and His Century, p. 12.

"No other English poet of the century has been so thoroughly aware of the intellectual tendencies of his century and has so emotionalized them. He takes the problem of the age --- what is to be the relation of mind and spirit, --- giving to the mind the attribute of knowledge, to the spirit the attribute of love."¹ While scientists dwell on the evolution of the physical, Browning turns his attention to the development of the soul, championing the soul-side of existence.² The new development in science was accompanied by a new attitude toward religion and the Bible, so-called higher criticism being rampant. Open to criticism on all sides, "not always orthodox in the strictly evangelical sense, but with open mind he ever sought for truth and having found it, followed it with an intellectual honesty and moral courage."³ His works bear abundant testimony that the great doctrines of the Christian faith were heartily accepted by him and upon grounds which seem to many to be more satisfactory than those generally given by theologians.⁴ He is analytical and subjective in a most marked degree, as becomes a teacher of an age of science.⁵

"He restates Christianity on its earliest, simplest, and

1. Clarke, H. A., Browning and His Century, pp. 13-14.

2. Ibid., p. 44.

3. Hermann, E. A. G., The Faith of Robert Browning, p. 17.

4. Berdsoe, E., Browning's Message to His Time, p. 4.

5. Ibid., p. 20.

"The great English poet of the century has been an
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 Browning turns his attention to the development of the
 soul, encompassing the soul-side of existence. The new
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 great doctrines of the Christian faith were heartily ac-
 cepted by him and upon grounds which seem to hang in no
 mere testimony than those generally given by the
 class. He is analytical and subjective in a most
 marked degree, as becomes a teacher of an age of science.

"He retains Christianity on its earliest, simplest, and

1. Oliver, H. A., Browning and His Century, pp. 12-14.
2. Ibid., p. 41.
3. Foreman, E. A. G., The Faith of Robert Browning, p. 17.
4. Barnes, S., Browning's Message to His Time, p. 4.
5. Ibid., p. 20.

too forgotten lines, the great truths of God, the soul, and the future life remain amid all the storm of adverse criticism."¹ Browning allies himself with the supernatural in Christianity. He is a mystic, his intuition of God being based upon the feeling of love, both in its human and its abstract aspects.² The close of **LA SAISIAZ** written after the death of a friend might well be applied to Browning.

"Why, he at least believed in Soul,
Was very sure of God."

Although he was not intensely interested in the great social movements and political life of his day, his work is instinct with sympathy for all classes and conditions of men. "He does not feel the ills of life with the intensity of Carlyle, nor the grief of Ruskin. His thought centers on the worth of every human being to himself and for God. Earth is only a place to grow in and prepare oneself for lives to come. Failure here, so long as the fight has been bravely fought, is not to be regarded with regret."³ A liberal in his attitude politically and socially, he seems to anticipate the twentieth century interest in the individual. Most of his poems deal with men and women, each facing some definite crisis in his

1. Berdoo, E., Browning's Message to His Time, p. 23.

2. Clarke, H. A., Browning and His Century, p. 114.

3. Ibid., p. 213.

life, the growth of the soul depending on the outcome of that crisis. He does not hesitate to bring into his poetry unclean situations from which most people shrink, murder, illicit love, failure, in his endeavor to find soul growth. Nor does he present these situations for the mere pleasure of dabbling in them; his sole aim is to see the human soul in conflict and if possible to have it emerge victorious.

Dr. Sharp says that one man complains of Browning's C. His "insane optimism."¹ Dr. Berdøe maintains Browning's is life-view. the bravest, "most bracing and virile body of literature from any English author since Shakespeare."² Another goes even farther saying, "He was one of the greatest exponents of the art of optimism that the world has ever seen."³ Dr. Woodberry says, "He is an optimist, like the bulk of his contemporaries, but there has always been a vein of pessimism in human thought and in our own time it runs through all literature. . . . The sense of failure in life permeates our literature It is felt in Browning's work. In RABBI BEN EZRA he retreats to the ground whither the mass of men retire --- the sense that the soul is more than its work. 'All I

1. Life of Robert Browning, p. 24.

2. Berdøe, E., Browning's Message to His Time, Intro. p.4.

3. Hermann, E. A. G., The Faith of Robert Browning, p. 14.

the growth of the soul depending on the amount
of that spirit. He does not hesitate to bring into his
happy analysis almost any fact which may be useful
anywhere, himself love, failure, in his capacity to find
good growth. For there is present these situations for
the mere presence of darkness in fact; his aim is to
to see the human soul in contact and it consists in
have its energy re-appearing.

Dr. Emerson says in a new edition of Emerson's 1842
"Lectures on the Philosophy of Language" in
the preface, "most interesting and valuable of all the
from any English author since Emerson's." Another goes
even further saying, "He was one of the greatest ex-
ponents of the art of writing that the world has ever
known." Dr. Webster says, "He is an original, like
the bulk of his contemporaries, but there was always seen
a vein of individuality in every thought and in the way
that it came through all literature. . . . The source
of failure in life permeates our literature. . . . It
is felt in Browning's work. In HANSEL AND GRACE he re-
flects to the ground which the hand of man feels --
the sense that the soul is made again the work. All

1. Life of Robert Browning, p. 12.
2. Browning's Message to His Time, Lecture 1.
3. Browning, R. A. G., The Poetry of Robert Browning, p. 14.

could never be, that I was worth to God,' is the formula of faith by which the optimist relying on his own consciousness defends himself from the pessimism inherent in experience."¹ Chesterton makes a broad claim: "He is passionately interested in and in love with existence. He is something far more convincing, far more comforting, far more religiously significant than an optimist: he is a happy man. . . . He did not love humanity but men. He believed that to every man that ever lived upon this earth had been given a definite and peculiar confidence of God."² "There is little danger that such optimism will become weak and sentimental and popular, the refuge of every idler, the excuse of every ne'er-do-well. There is no pessimism, however stern, that is so stern as this optimism; it is as merciless as the mercy of God."³ His own words used about another perhaps best express him.

"He gathers earth's whole good
 into his arms;
 Standing, as a man now, stately, strong and
 wise,
 Marching to fortune, not surprised by her,
 One great aim, like a guiding-star,
 above ---
 Which tasks strength, wisdom, stateliness,
 to lift
 His manhood to the height that takes the
 prize;
 A prize not near --- lest overlooking earth
 He rashly spring to seize it --- nor remote,

1. Woodberry, G. E., Robert Browning, Atlantic Monthly, February, 1890, p. 244.

2. Chesterton, G. K., Robert Browning, pp. 186-187.

3. Ibid., p. 189.

could never be, that I was worth to God, in the future
of faith by which the Christian relies on his own
and human nature. It is the Christian's business
in experience. It is the Christian's business to
it passionately fastened in his life with existence.
He is something far more something, far more something.
far more religiously significant than an optimist: he is
a happy man. . . . He did not love himself but man. He
believed that no other man that ever lived upon this
earth had been given a definite and positive confidence
of God. "There is little danger that such confidence
will become weak and scepticism and popular, the religion
of every idiot, the source of every evil-doer. There
is no pessimism, however there, that is no other as this
optimism; it is as pessimism as the word of God." His
own words used about another perhaps best express him.

and perhaps even a whole good
into his eyes;
Standing, again now, steady, strong and
wise,
Turning to fortune, not surprised by it,
One great aim, this a guiding-star,
above --
Which tasks strength, wisdom, steadfastness,
to lift
His standard to the height that faces the
prize;
A prize not near -- but overlooking earth
He calmly going to achieve it -- not remote,

1. Woodberry, G. E., Robert Browning, Atlantic Monthly,
February, 1892, p. 214.
2. Woodberry, G. E., Robert Browning, pp. 155-156.
3. Ibid., p. 182.

So that he rest upon his path content:
 But day by day, while shimmering grows
 shine,
 And the faint circlet prophesies the orb,
 He sees so much as, just evolving these,
 The stateliness, the wisdom and the
 strength,
 To due completion, will suffice this life,
 And lead him at his grandest to the grave."¹
 ---Colombe's Birthday.

Browning's optimism does not mean blind acceptance of fate or chance. Like Omar and Koheleth he feels the stirrings of doubt as all thoughtful men must.

"Just when we are safest, there's a sunset-
 touch,
 A fancy from a flower-bell, some one's
 death,
 A chorus-ending from Euripides, ---
 And that's enough for fifty hopes and fears
 As old and new at once as nature's self,
 To rap and knock and enter in our soul,
 Take hands and dance there, a fantastic
 ring,
 Round the ancient idol, on his base
 again, ---
 The grand Perhaps! We look on help-
 lessly.
 There the old misgivings, crooked ques-
 tions are ---
 This good God, --- what he could do, if he
 would,
 Would, if he could --- then must have done
 long since:
 If so, when, where and how? some way
 must be, ---
 Once feel about, and soon or late you hit
 Some sense, in which it might be, after all.
 Why not, "The Way, the Truth, the
 Life?"

----- That way
 Over the mountain, which who stands upon

1. The Complete Poetical Works of Robert Browning, p. 324.

So that he rest upon his path content;
But day by day, while afternoon grows
And the faint circle spreads the day,
He sees so much as, just evolving things,
The consciousness, the wisdom and the
strength,
To our completion, will deliver this life,
And lead him at his greatest to the grave.
---Goldschmidt's Birthday.

Providence's optimism does not mean blind acceptance of
fate or chance. Like Gray and Keats he feels the
existence of doubt as all thoughtful men must.
"But when we are silent, there's a sense-
less
A sense of a living-thing, some one's
soul,
A sense-which from twilight, ---
and last a sense for little hopes and fears
as old and new as time as nature's will,
To see and know and enter in our soul,
Some words and things the way, a senseless
ring,
Hence the endless ideal, on his face
again, ---
The great unknown! We look on help-
lessly,
Where the old meanings, crossed ques-
tions are ---
This good God, --- what he could do, if he
would,
Would, if he could --- that must have been
long since!
If so, when, where and how? some say
must be, ---
Once feel about, and each or late you'll
Some sense, in which it might be, after all.
Why not, the way, the truth, the
life?

--- That way
Over the mountains, which are always open
I. The Complete Poetical Works of Robert Browning, 2. 124.

Is apt to doubt if it be meant for a road;
 While, if he views it from the waste itself,
 Up goes the line there, plain from base to
 brow,
 Not vague, mistakeable! what's a break
 or two
 Seen from the unbroken desert either side?
 And then (to bring in fresh philosophy)
 What if the breaks themselves should prove
 at last
 The most consummate of contrivances
 To train a man's eye, teach him what is
 faith?"¹

-- Bishop Blougram's Apology.

Browning's primary interest is in the soul experiences of men and women. In writing to J. Milsand he says, "My stress lay on the incidents in the development of a soul: little else is worth study. I, at least, always thought so."² Over and over again he stresses the need of struggle for the soul's existence and growth. Evil, to him, is essentially good, because through evil comes good, just as one finds the mountain top only after traveling through the valley, so life's great soul-lifting experiences are preceded and followed by lower planes of ordinary, sometimes painful living. In his Parleyings, Browning urges struggle.

"What were life
 Did soul stand still therein, forego her
 strife
 Through the ambiguous Present to the goal
 Of some all-reconciling Future? Soul,

-
1. The Complete Poetical Works of Robert Browning, p. 458.
 2. Griggs, E. H., The Poetry and Philosophy of Browning,
 p. 15.

is not to doubt it, as he would for a word;
While, if he were to turn the words itself,
Up with the line there, what from hand to
word,
Not you, mischievous, what's a break
or two
From the unknown world of other side?
And such too much in French philosophy
What if the phrase 'I should have
at hand
The most convenient of circumstances
to turn a man's eye, teach him what is
latest
-- Philip Broughton's apology.

Thomas's strange interest in the word 'apology'
issues of sex and women. In writing to J. Milnes he
says, "My stress lay on the incidents in the development
of a soul: little else is worth study. I am sorry, at
least, that I have not been able to do more for the
need of a struggle for the soul's liberation and growth."
But, to him, in essentially good, because through evil
comes good, just as one finds the worst of the world
traveling through the valley, or life's great soul-life
ing experiences are preceded and followed by lower phases
of ordinary, sometimes painful living. In his father-
ing, Thomas never struggles.

What were his
his soul still shines, though he
exists
Through the darkness forward to the light
of some all-possessing Father? Good,
I. The Complete Poetical Works of Robert Browning, v. 455.
L. Briggs, A. H., The Poetry and Philosophy of Browning,
p. 12.

Nothing has been which shall not bettered
 be
 Hereafter, --- leave the root, by law's
 decree
 Whence springs the ultimate and perfect
 tree!
 Busy thee with unearthing root? Nay,
 climb ---
 Quit trunk, branch, leaf and flower ---
 Reach, rest sublime
 Where fruitage ripens in the blaze of day!"¹
 -- Parleying with Gerard De Lairese.

"No: as with the body so deals law with soul
 That's stung to strength through weakness,
 strives for good
 Through evil, --- earth its race-ground,
 heaven its goal,"²
 -- Parleying with Bernard de Mandeville.

In Apollo and the Fates, the Fates become drunk with the
 wine of happiness and sing the praise of man's triumphant
 struggle from infancy to old age, ending with:

"Age? Why, fear ends there: the contest
 concluded,
 Man did live his life, did escape from the
 fray:
 Not scratchless but unscathed, he somehow
 eluded
 Each blow fortune dealt him, and con-
 quers to-day:
 To-morrow --- new chance and fresh
 strength, --- might we say?

 Laud then Man's life --- no defeat but a
 triumph!"³
 --- Apollo and the Fates.

Again he exults,

"No, when the fight begins within him-
 self,

-
1. The Complete Poetical Works of Robert Browning, p. 1276.
 2. Ibid., p. 1247.
 3. Ibid., p. 1245.

A man's worth something. God stoops
 o'er his head,
 Satan looks up between his feet --- both
 tug ---
 He's left, himself, i' the middle: the soul
 wakes
 And grows, Prolong that battle through
 his life!
 Never leave growing till the life to come!"¹
 -- Bishop Blougram's Apology.

Rabbi Ben Ezra, who begs us grow old along with him,
 challenges:

"Then, welcome each rebuff
 That turns earth's smoothness rough,
 Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but
 go!
 Be our joys three-parts pain!
 Strive, and hold cheap the strain;
 Learn, nor account the pang; dare, never
 grudge the throe!

For thence, --- a paradox
 Which comforts while it mocks, ---
 Shall life succeed in that it seems to fail:
 What I aspired to be,
 And was not, comforts me:
 A brute I might have been, but would not
 sink i' the scale."²

-- Rabbi Ben Ezra.

To Browning the struggle is worthy only when the aim is
 high, and failure in such cases is only apparent, not real.
 A woman tortured by her sense of failure, tricked by her
 adversary, remarks:

"Better have failed in the high aim, as I,
 Than vulgarly in the low aim succeed
 As, God be thanked, I do not!"³
 -- The Inn Album.

1. The Complete Poetical Works of Robert Browning, p. 464.
 2. Ibid., p. 501.
 3. Ibid., p. 1044.

To Browning, honesty of purpose, not success in achievement, is of supreme value.

"'tis not what man Does which
exalts him, but what man Would do!"¹
-- Saul.

In A DEATH IN THE DESERT John, the last eyewitness of Christ's ministry, tells how Christ revealed God as Love, but to attain knowledge of God one must suffer.

"'Is it for nothing we grow old and weak,
'We whom God loves? When pain ends,
gain ends too."²

"'For life, with all it yields of joy and woe,
'And hope and fear, --- believe the aged
friend, ---
'Is just our chance o' the prize of learning
love,
'How love might be, hath been indeed,
and is;"³

Whereas Koheleth and Omar search in vain for God, Browning is very sure of Him. He sees Him revealed in nature, in all mankind, but pre-eminently in Christ, the All-Loving. "In talking with Mrs. Orr, his biographer, Browning quoted from the EPILOGUE OF DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

'That one Face, far from vanish, rather
grows,
Or decomposes but to recompose,
Becomes my universe that feels
and knows.'

adding, 'That Face is the Face of Christ, that is how I feel about Him.'⁴

1. The Complete Poetical Works of Robert Browning, p. 244.

2. Ibid., p. 505.

3. Ibid., p. 506.

4. Hermann, E. A. G., The Faith of Robert Browning, p. 32.

In AN EPISTLE a young Arabian physician is writing to his teacher about the strange experience of Lazarus. He longs to believe in such a God as Lazarus describes, but his scientific mind revolts at accepting a super-natural God. He closes his letter with these words:

"The very God! think, Abib; dost thou
think?
So, the All-Great, were the All-Loving
too ---
So, through the thunder comes a human
voice
Saying, 'O heart I made, a heart beats
here!
'Face, my hands fashioned, see it in my-
self!
'Thou hast no power nor mayst conceived
of mine,
'But love I gave thee, with myself to love,
'And thou must love me who have died
for thee!!
The madman saith He said so: it is
strange."¹

Pompilia in telling her tragic story speaks of her infant son, then says,

"I never realized God's birth before ---
How He grew likest God in being born."²
-- The Ring and The Book.

As Christ is the symbol of love, so God Himself is love.

"'Since sages who, this noontide, meditate
'In Rome or Athens, may descry some
point
'Of the eternal power, hid yestereve;
'And, as thereby the power's whole mass
extends the aether floating o'er,
'The love that tops the might, the Christ
in God."³

-- A Death in the Desert.

1. The Complete Poetical Works of Robert Browning, p. 445.
2. Ibid., p. 800.
3. Ibid., p. 506.

In an humble and young English physician is writing to
his brother about the strange experience of his life.
He is to believe in such a God as his brother describes, but
his scientific mind revolts at such a thing as a super-natural

God. He closes his letter with these words:

"The very God I think, I feel, I know
exists, the All-Great, the All-Loving
God, through the human voice a human
voice, I hear, I feel, I know, a heart beats
that, my words fashioned, see as it were
all! God has no power nor any knowledge
of mine, but I have God, with myself in love,
and I know that love we have died
for each other!
The human voice He said so: it is
all that."

Forgetting to mention that every speech of his infant

and, then says,

"I never realized God's love before --
now He gives himself to me in such words."
-- The King and the God.

As Christ is the speech of love, so God Himself is love.

"Since man was, this possible, possible
in Him or Himself, may desire come
to the eternal peace, his presence;
And, as surely, the power's whole man
extends the other, lifting it,
The love that love the light, the great
in God, as
-- A Peace in the Desert."

I. The Complete Poetical Works of Robert Browning, p. 22.
2. Ibid., p. 203.
3. Ibid., p. 203.

However, Browning's idea of love is not a weak, fickle, changeable emotion. It is rather an eternal force having within it powers of justice and righteousness.

"All's love, yet all's law."¹
-- Saul.

"Love with him is the golden key wherewith to unlock the world of the Universe, of the soul, of all nature."² His idea of God as love permeates his whole philosophy of life so that to him the love man has for God differs in no respect from man's love for woman; all love, to him, is divine. His own beautiful experience so exalts his soul, he sees all pure love as the gift of God. While Koheleth, in bitterness of spirit, finds not one good woman in a thousand and Omar finds happy companionship with many, Browning believes life holds only one supreme love and that one eternal. In his dedication of *MEN AND WOMEN*, one of the few poems written especially for Mrs. Browning, he reveals to her the height and depth of his devotion. He wishes he might do something unusual for her as did Rafael and Dante for their beloved, but his verse is the best he can offer, so

"Pray you, look on these my men and
women,

1. The Complete Poetical Works of Robert Browning, p. 243.
2. Sharp, W., Life of Robert Browning, p. 194.

However, Browning's idea of love is not a weak, flimsy, changeable emotion. It is rather an eternal force that dwells in the power of justice and righteousness.

"All's love, yet all's law."
-- Gail.

"I have with me in the golden key, therefore to me look the words of the Deliverer, of the soul, of all nature." The idea of God as love pervades his whole philosophy of life so that to him the love man has for God differs in no respect from man's love for woman; all love, to him, is divine. In our beautiful experience so much of his soul, he sees all pure love as but God's God. While Browning, in his enthusiasm of spirit, finds not one good woman for a thousand and God's love every man's relationship with many. Browning believes life holds only one supreme love and that one eternal. In his vision of the two worlds, one of the two worlds existed especially for Mrs. Browning, he reveals to her the height and depth of his devotion. He wishes he might be something unusual for her as did Rafael and Dante for their beloved, but his voice is the best he can offer, so

"Try you, look on these my own eyes
Woman,

1. The Complete Poetical Works of Robert Browning, p. 215.
2. Sharp, W., Life of Robert Browning, p. 194.

Take and keep my fifty poems finished;
 Where my heart lies, let my brain lie also!"¹
 -- One Word More.

Later he speaks of the moon shining in London as it did
 "yonder late in Florence."

"What, there's nothing in the moon note-
 worthy?
 Nay: for if that moon could love a mortal,
 Use, to charm him (so to fit a fancy),
 All her magic ('tis the old sweet mythos),
 She would turn a new side to her mortal,
 Side unseen of herdsman, huntsman,
 steersman ---

.

"What were seen? None knows, none ever
 shall know.
 Only this is sure --- the sight were other,
 Not the moon's same side, born late in
 Florence,
 Dying now impoverished here in London.
 God be thanked, the meanest of his crea-
 tures
 Boasts two soul-sides, one to face the
 world with,
 One to show a woman when he loves her!

"This I say of me, but think of you, Love!
 This to you --- yourself my moon of poets!
 Ah, but that's the world's side, there's the
 wonder,
 Thus they see you, praise you, think they
 know you!
 There, in turn I stand with them and
 praise you ---
 Out of my own self, I dare to phrase it.
 But the best is when I glide from out them,
 Cross a step or two of dubious twilight,
 Come out on the other side, the novel
 Silent silver lights and darks undreamed of,
 Where I hush and bless myself with silence.

1. The Complete Poetical Works of Robert Browning, p. 474.

"Oh, their Rafael of the dear Madonnas,
 Oh, their Dante of the dread Inferno,
 Wrote one song --- and in my brain I sing
 it,
 Drew one angel --- borne, see, on my
 bosom!"¹

-- One Word More.

In BY THE FIRESIDE he dreams of years with his loved
 one, until they shall sit together talking over the
 past.

"And to watch you sink by the fire-side now
 Back again, as you mutely sit
 Musing by fire-light, that great brow
 And the spirit-small hand propping it,
 Yonder, my heart knows how!"²

But his "moon of poets" does not stay with him, leaving
 him to travel life's journey alone. Loving her has given
 meaning to life and even though he no longer has her vis-
 ible presence he still feels the inspiration of her soul.

"O lyric Love, half angel and half bird
 And all a wonder and a wild desire, ---
 Boldest of hearts that ever braved the sun,

"Hail then, and hearken from the realms of
 help!
 Never may I commence my song, my due
 To God who best taught song by gift of
 thee,
 Except with bent head and beseeching
 hand ---
 That still, despite the distance and the
 dark,
 What was, again may be; some inter-
 change
 Of grace, some splendour once thy very
 thought,

1. The Complete Poetical Works of Robert Browning, p. 474.
 2. Ibid., p. 248.

Some benediction anciently thy smile:
 ---Never conclude, but raising hand and
 head
 Thither where eyes, that cannot reach,
 yet yearn
 For all hope, all sustainment, all reward,
 Their utmost up and on, --- so blessing
 back
 In those thy realms of help, that heaven
 thy home,
 Some whiteness which, I judge, thy face
 makes proud,
 Some wanness where, I think, thy foot
 may fall!"¹

-- The Ring and the Book.

In his great poem on death he again speaks of her, who
 makes him long for eternity.

"Then a light, then thy breast,
 O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp
 thee again,
 And with God be the rest!"²

-- Prospice.

Because love has been the most powerful factor in
 his life he feels no fear of death, rather he welcomes
 it as the door to a future life, a continuation of life,
 love, and achievement. In speaking to Dr. Sharp about
 death he said, "Why, you know as well as I that death
 is life, just as our daily, our momentarily dying is
 none the less alive and ever recruiting new forces of
 existence. Without death, which is our crapelike, church-
 yardy word for change, for growth, there could be no pro-
 longation of that which we call life. . . . For myself I

1. The Complete Poetical Works of Robert Browning, pp.
 666-667.

2. Ibid., p. 517.

deny death as an end of everything. Never say of me
that I am dead."¹

"I affirm and re-affirm it therefore: only
make as plain
As that man now lives, that, after dying,
man will live again."²
-- La Saisiaz.

His finest expression of his attitude toward death is
where he calls it the "best and the last" fight.

"Fear death? --- to feel the fog in my
throat,
The mist in my face,
When the snows begin, and the blasts denote
I am nearing the place,
The power of the night, the press of the
storm,
The post of the foe;
Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visi-
ble form,
Yet the strong man must go:
For the journey is done and the summit
attained,
And the barriers fall,
Though a battle's to fight ere the guerdon
be gained,
The reward of it all.
I was ever a fighter, so --- one fight more,
The best and the last!
I would hate that death bandaged my eyes
and forbore,
And bade me creep past.
No! let me taste the whole of it, fare like
my peers
The heroes of old,
Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's
arrears
Of pain, darkness and cold.
For sudden the worst turns the best to the
brave,
The black minute's at end,

1. Sharp, W., Life of Robert Browning, p. 196.

2. The Complete Poetical Works of Robert Browning, p. 1129.

And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices
 that rave,
 Shall dwindle, shall blend,
 Shall change, shall become first a peace out
 of pain,
 Then a light, then thy breast,
 O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp
 thee again,
 And with God be the rest!"¹
 -- Prospice.

His idea of death is not annihilation, as is Koheleth's, nor uncertainty as is Omar's, it is simply a going into a new life in a new world, where there is joy and old problems will be solved.

"Waft of soul's wing!
 What lies above?
 Sunshine and Love,
 Skyblue and Spring!"²
 -- La Saisiaz.

"Somewhere, below, above,
 Shall a day dawn --- this I know ---
 When Power, which vainly strove
 My weakness to o'erthrow,
 Shall triumph. I breathe, I move,

 I truly am, at last!
 For a veil is rent between
 Me and the truth which passed
 Fitful, half-guessed, half-seen,
 Grasped at --- not gained, held fast.

I for my race and me
 Shall apprehend life's law:
 In the legend of man shall see
 Writ large what small I saw
 In my life's tale: both agree."³
 -- Reverie.

-
1. The Complete Poetical Works of Robert Browning, pp.516-7.
 2. Ibid., p. 1122.
 3. Ibid., p. 1315.

And the silence, the light-voices
 That came,
 Shall answer, shall answer
 Of light,
 That a light, that a light,
 O thou soul of my soul! I shall sing
 Love again,
 And with God be the world!
 -- Theophile.

His love of death is not annihilation, as in X-
 nianism, but something as in Ours, it is simply a
 going into a new life in a new world, where there is joy
 and old problems will be solved.

Life of soul's world!
 What life is there?
 Something and love,
 Something and something!
 -- In Ours.

Something, before, above,
 Shall a day have --- this I know ---
 When lower, which vainly strive
 My weakness to overcome,
 Shall triumph. I know, I know,

I shall see, as I shall!
 For a veil is torn between
 Me and the truth which I know
 And the truth which I know
 Graced at --- not gained, held fast.

I for my race and me
 Shall understand life's law:
 In the legend of man shall see
 With larger what shall I see
 In my life's tale: both agree,
 -- Heverle.

1. The Complete Poetical Works of Robert Browning, pp. 415-7.
2. Ibid., p. 415.
3. Ibid., p. 415.

Frequently he gives expression to the idea of ^{future} worlds, one of the most marked being in the poem beginning, "Beautiful Evelyn Hope is dead!" Her lover mourns for her saying, "Is it too late then, Evelyn Hope?", then with assurance answers

"No, indeed! for God above
 Is great to grant, as mighty to make,
 And creates the love to reward the love;
 I claim you still, for my own love's
 sake!
 Delayed it may be for more lives yet,
 Through worlds I shall traverse, not a
 few:
 Much is to learn, much to forget
 Ere the time be come for taking you."¹
 -- Evelyn Hope.

It is not because he finds life unendurable here that he looks to future lives, it is rather because he finds such joy in living that he cannot conceive of death as closing all. He gives expression to the pure joy of living in

"Oh, the wild joys of living! the leaping
 from rock up to rock,
 'The strong rending of boughs from the
 fir-tree, the cool silver shock
 'Of the plunge in a pool's living water, the
 hunt of the bear,
 'And the sultriness showing the lion is
 couched in his lair.
 'And the meal, the rich dates yellowed
 over with gold dust divine,
 'And the locust-flesh steeped in the pitcher,
 the full draught of wine,
 'And the sleep in the dried river-channel
 where bulrushes tell

1. The Complete Poetical Works of Robert Browning, p. 229.

...frequently he gives expression to the love of words, and
of the past which he has in the past, "Remember
Evelyn Hope is dead!" Her lover never for her saying,
"It is too late now, Evelyn Hope?" then with admiration

answer

"Oh, indeed! for God above
is great so great, so mighty to make
and through the love to reach the love;
I shall you still, for my own love's
sake!
I shall be for you more than yet,
through which I shall breathe, and a
love
I shall be to reach, much to forget
And the time he came for taking you,
-- Evelyn Hope.

It is not because he finds life wonderful here
that he looks to future lives, it is rather because he
finds such joy in living that he cannot conceive of death
as anything all. He gives expression to the pure joy of
living in

"Oh, the wild joys of living! the leaping
from rock to rock,
The strong feeling of being free from the
fear, the cool silver stream
for the change in a pool's living water, the
glow of the sun,
and the softness, knowing the life is
counted in his hair,
and the soul, the rich dates followed
over with gold and silver,
and the heart-leaf stopped in the gutter,
the full dream of time,
and the sleep in the third river-channel
where the water falls

'That the water was wont to go warbling
 so softly and well.
 'How good is man's life, the mere living!
 how fit to employ
 'All the heart and the soul and the senses
 for ever in joy!"¹

-- Saul.

He seems to understand all of Omar's dissatisfaction and has an old man answer the charges against life and God.

"Yet gifts should prove their use:
 I own the Past profuse
 Of power each side, perfection every
 turn:
 Eyes, ears took in their dole,
 Brain treasured up the whole;
 Should not the heart beat once "How good
 to live and learn?"

Not once beat "Praise be Thine!
 'I see the whole design,
 'I, who saw power, see now love perfect
 too:
 'Perfect I call Thy plan:
 'Thanks that I was a man!
 'Maker, remake, complete, --- I trust
 what Thou shalt do!"

As it was better, youth
 Should strive, through acts uncouth,
 Toward making, than repose on aught
 found made:
 So, better, age, exempt
 From strife, should know, than tempt
 Further. Thou waitedest age: wait death
 nor be afraid!"²

-- Rabbi Ben Ezra.

He must have in mind Omar's complaints against the pot-
 ter when he says,

1. The Complete Poetical Works of Robert Browning, pp.240-1.
 2. Ibid., pp. 501-2.

'That the water was good to go drinking
 as good as any, little, the water living!
 'All the water and the good and the water
 for ever in the world!

-- End --

No more to understand all of the world's history

and how to live in the world the water living

and God.

'That water should have been good
 I saw the water living
 of water and the water living
 'That water should have been good
 I saw the water living
 of water and the water living
 'That water should have been good
 I saw the water living
 of water and the water living

'That water should have been good
 I saw the water living
 of water and the water living
 'That water should have been good
 I saw the water living
 of water and the water living
 'That water should have been good
 I saw the water living
 of water and the water living

'That water should have been good
 I saw the water living
 of water and the water living
 'That water should have been good
 I saw the water living
 of water and the water living
 'That water should have been good
 I saw the water living
 of water and the water living

-- End --

No more to understand all of the world's history

and how to live in the world the water living

"But all, the world's coarse thumb
 And finger failed to plumb,
 So passed in making up the main account;
 All instincts immature,
 All purposes unsure,
 That weighed not as his work, yet swelled
 the man's amount:

Thoughts hardly to be packed
 Into a narrow act,
 Fancies that broke through language and
 escaped;
 All I could never be,
 All, men ignored in me,
 This, I was worth to God, whose wheel the
 pitcher shaped.

Ay, note that Potter's wheel,
 That metaphor! and feel
 Why time spins fast, why passive lies our
 clay, ---
 Thou, to whom fools propound,
 When the wine makes its round,
 'Since life fleets, all is change; the Past
 gone, seize to-day!'

Fool! All that is, at all,
 Lasts ever, past recall;
 Earth changes, but thy soul and God
 stand sure:
 What entered into thee,
That was, is, and shall be:
 Time's wheel runs back or stops: Potter
 and clay endure.

He fixed thee mid this dance
 Of plastic circumstance,
 This Present, thou, forsooth, wouldst fain
 arrest:
 Machinery just meant
 To give thy soul its bent,
 Try thee and turn thee forth, sufficiently
 impressed.

What though the earlier grooves
 Which ran the laughing loves
 Around thy base, no longer pause and
 press?

Right all, the world's a stage,
 And every man and woman
 Passes through its winding way,
 All in its time,
 All in its place,
 That which we see as the world, yet we feel
 The world's a stage.

Therefore, ready to be packed
 Into a narrow bed,
 Translated from the language of
 the world;
 All I could ever be,
 All I could ever be,
 This, I was worth to God, whose wheel the
 world's a stage.

Ay, now that I feel the wheel,
 That I feel the wheel,
 My life is a stage, why should I care
 For the world?
 Then, to whom I feel the wheel,
 When the wheel turns the world,
 'Since life is a stage, all is a stage; the wheel
 turns, like a stage.'

Fool! All that is, at all,
 Lasts ever, just recall;
 Earth changes, but the soul and God
 stand still;
 What I feel the wheel,
 Just as it is, and that is
 Time's wheel runs back or stops; I feel
 and my heart.

So I feel the wheel this dance
 Of life's circumstances,
 This I feel, this I feel, would I
 stand still;
 Happily I feel the wheel
 To give me what I feel,
 Try this and turn the wheel, sufficiently
 I feel.

What though the wheel turns
 Which run the laughing lover
 Around the wheel, no longer pause and
 greet.

What though, about thy rim,
 Skull-things in order grim
 Grow out, in graver mood, obey the sterner
 stress?

Look not thou down but up!
 To uses of a cup,
 The festal board, lamp's flash and trum-
 pet's peal,
 The new wine's foaming flow,
 The Master's lips aglow!
 Thou, heaven's consummate cup, what
 need'st thou with earth's wheel?

But I need, now as then,
 Thee, God, who moulded men;
 And since, not even while the whirl was
 worst,
 Did I, --- to the wheel of life
 With shapes and colours rife,
 Bound dizzily, --- mistake my end, to slake
 Thy thirst:

So, take and use Thy work:
 Amend what flaws may lurk,
 What strain o' the stuff, what warpings past
 the aim!
 My times be in Thy hand!
 Perfect the cup as planned!
 Let age approve of youth, and death com-
 plete the same!"¹

-- Rabbi Ben Ezra.

In his last poem published in London the day he
 died in Venice² he expresses his life-view of struggle,
 love, courage, and eternity.

"At the midnight in the silence of the sleep-
 time,
 When you set your fancies free,
 Will they pass to where --- by death, fools
 think, imprisoned ---

1. The Complete Poetical Works of Robert Browning, pp.502-3.
 2. Berdøe, E., The Browning Cyclopedica, p. 49.

What brought about the
Small things in order
Gone was the greater mood, once the
strange

Look not then down but up!
To gaze at a cup,
The fatal hour, I saw the flash and firm-
But a gasp,
The day wine's flowing fire,
The Western's life again!
Then, heaven's punishment was, what
needed of this with earth's wheel?

But I need, now as then,
Love, God, and neighbor man;
And since, not even while the wheel was
round,
Did I, -- to the wheel of life
With ropes and chains etc,
Round finally, -- mistake my end, to make
The least!

So, take and use the work;
And what time was I lost,
That strain of the soul, what workings past
the old!
If there be in the world
Perfect the new in himself!
Let me approve at heart, and reach out
To the new!
-- What has been.

In his last poem published in London the day be-
fore in Venice, he expressed his life-view of struggle,
love, courage, and sacrifice.
*At the midnight in the silence of the sleep-
ing
When you see your favorite tree,
Will they pass to where -- by death, looks
black, impossible --

1. The Complete Poetical Works of Robert Browning, pt. 302-3.
2. Browning, R., The Browning Centenary, p. 20.

Low he lies who once so loved you, whom
you loved so,

--- Pity me?

Oh to love so, be so loved, yet so mistaken!
What had I on earth to do
With the slothful, with the mawkish, the
unmanly?
Like the aimless, helpless, hopeless, did I
drivel

--- Being --- who?

One who never turned his back but
marched breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed, though right were worsted,
wrong would triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight
better,

Sleep to wake.

No, at noonday in the bustle of man's
worktime
Greet the unseen with a cheer!
Bid him forward, breast and back as either
should be,
'Strive and thrive!' cry 'Speed, --- fight
on, fare ever

There as here!"¹

-- Epilogue.

"From the first poem PAULINE to ASOLANDO the teach- D. Estimates
ing is unvarying, 'All's love, yet all's law.' Love is of
the 'Philosopher's Stone' which converts the basest things Browning.
of life to pure gold; it is the 'Universal Solvent' of the
intellectual alchemist, which melts away our greatest dif-
ficulties; it is the 'Universal Medicine' which renovates
our souls and restores to us all the vigor of our youth.

1. The Complete Poetical Works of Robert Browning, p. 1317,
Epilogue to Asolando.

How an idea was born to love you, thus
you loved me,
--- Myself

Oh to love as, he as loved, yet so related;
What had I on earth to do
With the mortal, with the mortal, the
mortal?
Like the almsman, the poor, the poor,
I
--- Being -- who?

One who never found his back but
watched himself forward,
Never doubted of his world's power,
Never doubted, though right were wanted,
Wrong would triumph,
Held no tail to him, and balled to light
better,
Elbow to elbow.

No, at noonday in the fields of men's
worlds
Green the answer with a cheer!
Did his forward, forward and back as with
should be,
'Borne and driven' are 'Spent' -- light
on, love ever
There are hearts,
-- Beloved.

"From the first book PAULINE to ADOLPHUS the death - D. Eastman
of
Browning.
and in university, 'All's Love, yet all's law', love is
the 'Philosophy's Stone' which converts the basest things
of life to pure gold; it is the 'Universal Solvent' of the
intellectual elements, which melts away our greatest ill-
fancies; it is the 'Universal Medicine' which restores
our souls and restores to us all the vigor of our youth.
I. The Complete Poetical Works of Robert Browning, p. 1217.
Epilogue to Adolphus.

Love answers all enigmas of life."¹ Such an estimate comes from a Browning enthusiast, but even practical men of affairs have found in him great inspiration, for Theodore Roosevelt said, "There are poets whom we habitually read far more often than Browning, and who minister better to our more primitive needs and emotions. There are few whose lines come to us so naturally in certain crises of the soul, which are also crises of the intellect."²

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1. Burridge, B. M., Robert Browning as an Exponent of a Philosophy of Life, Introductory letter by Dr. Berdoe.
 2. Hermann, E. A. G., The Faith of Robert Browning, p. 49.

have known all things at first. But no matter
how far a thing is advanced, but even so it
was of little use to him in the end. The
theology of the time, "that the world was made
only for the sake of the human race, and was made
for better or for worse, and was made
there and for those things that are so naturally in
the course of the world, which are the cause of the
world."

1. Theology of the time, "that the world was made
for better or for worse, and was made
there and for those things that are so naturally in
the course of the world, which are the cause of the
world."

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PART II

COMPARISONS OF THE LIFE-VIEWS OF ECCLESIASTES, OMAR KHAYYÁM AND ROBERT BROWNING

PART II

CRITICISMS OF THE LIFE-VIEWS OF SOCIETIES, AND
THEIR CONSEQUENCES

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COMPARISONS OF THE LIFE-VIEWS
OF ECCLESIASTES, OMAR KHAYYÁM,
AND ROBERT BROWNING.

The preceding study leads one to compare and contrast the life-views of Koheleth, Omar Khayyám and Robert Browning, arriving at some definite conclusions as to their outlook on life. Such a study is interesting because throughout the generations life has brought much the same experiences to all mankind -- joy, sorrow, love requited and unrequited, hopes fulfilled and deceived, ambition realized, and foiled. Time and place may differ, but the human heart remains the same, and wherever man is thoughtful, questions arise that demand answers, and it is a man's answers to these questions that determine his attitude toward life. Therein lies the interest in these three men who represent three distinct ways of looking at life. They are so typical of the possible philosophies of life that today, at least two of them have groups of men and women who have formed societies in their names. A large number of people belong to the Omar Khayyám Society, meeting to discuss his solution of life's

I. Introduction.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LIFE-VIEW
OF SCHOPENHAUER, GEORGE BAKER,
AND ROBERT BROWNING.

The preceding study leads one to compare and contrast the life-views of Schopenhauer, George Baker, and Robert Browning, arriving at some definite conclusions as to their position on life. Such a study is justifiable inasmuch as the generalization of life and thought and the same experience in all nations -- the world, have revealed and interpreted, those feelings and feelings, religion revealed, and failed. There are three main things but the human heart reveals the same, and wherever we go in the world, questions arise that demand answers, and it is a man's nature to seek questions that determine his attitude toward life. There is the interest in these three men who represent three different ages of mankind at life. They are so typical of the position philosophies of life that today, at least two of them have struck of men and women who have found satisfaction in their nature. A large number of people belong to the same thought society, seeking to discover the solution of life's

problem. So convinced are they that he has found the truth that during the World War they distributed thousands of copies of his quatrains among the soldiers, feeling therein that the men at the front might find inspiration and consolation. On the other hand are the Browning Societies scattered over the English speaking world, sometimes more flourishing than at others. Early in the twentieth century they were numerous, then interest seemed to die down, but during the last year new enthusiasm for Browning seems to have awakened. Some men and women realize he has best expressed their own attitude toward God and man. Koheleth, probably has no cult named especially for him, but there are thousands who in their heart of hearts repeat, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." It is because these men are so typical of three distinct groups of humanity that it seems worth while to consider their interpretations of life in close proximity.

One can imagine Koheleth, a man of years and experience, living in war ridden, politically oppressed Palestine, seeing suffering and oppression on all sides, trying to solve the riddle of the Universe. He has gathered about him a group of congenial souls -- and together they discuss life, death, riches, injus-

II. The attitudes of the three men toward life in general.

tice, and all the other problems that have engrossed the mind of man. A solemn figure he sits there, but not too solemn because a smile hovers occasionally around his eyes and lips: he is a gentle cynic. In his honest endeavor to find soul satisfaction he has tried every known experience of life, and has decided that each one is merely a chasing after wind. In his search for wisdom he finds vanity because God has placed eternity in the heart of man, then has shut all doors to mock man's effort to know. He has discovered that riches breed discontent by continually increasing one's desires which are never satisfied, while to him, woman is simply a snare to entrap the hearts of men. As he looks at life, death seems preferable, and yet no one knows what comes after death, so it is better to be alive than dead. After all, life is a constant repetition, the sun rises and sets, only to rise once more; the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is never full; the seasons come and go, but there are only spring, summer, fall, and winter, and they must repeat the weary round; generation follows generation, each thinking it has found some new secret, only to find that another generation, ages ago, discovered the same thing; there is no new thing under the sun. In-

justice is rampant, but what can one do when kings are all powerful and the very walls repeat any word of disloyalty. Even God, Himself, seems far away and indifferent to mankind's suffering. Taken all in all, life is vanity of vanities. Such an outlook on life sounds most pessimistic, and, if this were his whole philosophy, life would indeed be dark. However, as his companions sitting around him become more and more solemn as the picture of existence becomes more gloomy, a smile begins to play over his face and a light comes into his eyes. In spite of all these weary observations, "Light is sweet;" it is well to live happily with the woman one loves, to till the soil, and to enjoy the fruits of one's labor, to sleep the sleep of honest exhaustion. It is well to eat, drink, and be merry while one may, ere old age and death bring enjoyment to a close. Probably God takes pleasure in the delights of men. The outlook is not altogether dark. When one considers the day in which he lives, one feels Koheleth has a wholesome attitude toward life.

It is Omar who is the more pessimistic. A great scientist, astronomer, and mathematician, he possesses

the learning of his day and like all learned men he longs to solve the mysteries of life. To be able to foretell the position of a star years hence and yet to be unable to know what becomes of the human soul, so much more real than any star, torments him. He, too, is a teacher with his bands of disciples. One can imagine them turning from their study of the physical universe to the spiritual values of life, the whence and whither of the soul, the problem of human suffering, the meaning of death. Omar is as puzzled as his Persian pupils and goes to the rose garden to solve the questions, if possible, by himself. The garden is lovely with its trellises, arbors, and rose trees, the air heavy with the perfume of thousands of roses. He reclines under a rose tree and looks out over the beautiful rolling country with its rich vineyards and olive groves and happy homes. As he revels in the beauty around him, the dainty saki bearer, in her colorful Oriental robes, conscious of her charm, comes bearing sparkling wine, which is no more enticing than she is herself. She offers him the wine, then reclines beside him and together they sip of the wine of life. All is at peace; the jangling chords are reduced to harmony; the tantalizing questions are stilled; Omar's

soul is at rest. However, as he revels in the beauty of the woman and the fragrance of the roses, a little crippled child hobbles into the garden. Immediately, the joy of the moment has fled; the old problems are again seeking solution. Why should there be human suffering? Why should youth and beauty vanish with the rose and "life's sweet scented manuscript close"? Why should the nightingale's song cease? Who knows? Within a few hours marauders may ravish the countryside and steal away the sweet bearer of saki. Who rules the Universe? Doesn't He care? Why can't mankind be ever at peace within? Who knows? He is no longer conscious of the lovely maid at his side. He is searching for God and cannot find Him, save as a "Master of the Show." What becomes of this searching eager soul? Who knows? Ah, better than forever wrestling with these eternal problems is it to drink of the wine and forget sorrow, disappointment, and pain, forget the human soul, forget death is coming to end all. Drink, and remember the lovely girl at your side, the exquisite fragrance of the roses, the tender song of the nightingale. Drink, that you may forget the pains and that you may remember the joys. After all, the past has gone; the future is all unknown; the present

is here and now; sieze it before it, too, vanishes. In the joy of the present he would drown all thought of the whence, the whither and the why. He cannot reconcile good and evil, therefore, he is despondent and hopeless save in the wine cup.

In direct contrast to Omar is Robert Browning with his bouyant optimism, singing a song of triumph throughout his poetry. While Omar and Koheleth are a part of the dim, shadowy past, Browning stands out clearly in the blazing light of day. One sees him walking through the controversies of the latter half of the nineteenth century serene in soul. Evolution and higher criticism demand his attention and he gives it carefully and thoroughly, coming out of his study with a firm conviction that

"God's in his heaven, --
All's right with the world."

Nor is this optimism the result of a life made easy. As a poet, life is a constant struggle against indifference, misunderstanding, and adverse criticism. As a man, he lives life to the full, having quiet years of study and work crowned with a love, the completeness of which is seldom vouchsafed to man. He is not a teacher like Omar or Koheleth, but he is, nevertheless, in the companionship of souls seeking the truth,

his life companion no less eager than he. In their home in Italy, he and Mrs. Browning gather about them congenial spirits whose chief delight is discussing human problems. During those years two souls are knit together so firmly that death, itself, cannot sever them, so that when the soul of his soul ^{is} ~~was~~ taken from him he suffered ^s ~~ed~~ as few men suffer. It is then that he proves his optimism is not merely pretty words put down on paper; it is the keynote of his life, for after his crushing sorrow he does not seclude himself, living as a recluse, nor does he give himself over to reckless pleasure as Omar might, but calmly he continues as a genial, social being associating with his fellow men, a living example of his optimistic theories. His bright outlook on life is not the result of ignorance or of the foolish veiling of the eyes to sorrow and evil because he deliberately looks at the darkest pictures life affords -- envy, hatred, murder and lust. He studies the human soul in all its multitude of reactions to life and finds therein seeds of hope of better things. To him, the human soul is not a mere nothing struggling against unknown odds, but it is a part of God, Himself; as the soul struggles, God struggles, too, and the victory belongs to

God as well as man. While the soul is "a god in germ", man is given the choice of good or evil and must assume moral responsibility for his actions. The struggle lasts a life time, as did that of Paracelsus, but gradually rising step by step man eventually climbs into the light of full day. If the struggle has been honest and the aim high, the outcome, although apparently failure, must be good. Whereas, Omar and Koheleth feel that evil may eventually overcome good, Browning is confident good will triumph in the end. In fact, he sees evil as possible good, believing man, during life, cannot differentiate between good and evil, but in some future day, man may find that what he called evil is, in God's providence, good. In the RING AND THE BOOK, he shows that even in this life good comes out of evil. Pompilia, the child of wretched parentage, brought up by ordinary people, marrying a scoundrel when she is still a child, suffers spiritual and physical agony, and dies while still in her teens. Yet, she finds good coming out of evil in her love for Caponsacchi and in her motherhood. Even for his most despicable character, Guido, Browning sees some hope in the future. In the eyes of the poet, it is the development of the human soul through

struggle that gives dignity to life, nor is the struggle in vain. Such optimism is not merely the result of a healthy body and mind placed in favorable surroundings, where struggle is unknown, nor is it the result of stupid ignorance; it is the deep conviction that comes after personal experience and understanding thought. Someone has said that all of Browning's philosophy can be summed up in RABBI BEN EZRA and PROSPICE, and this seems quite true, because the one reveals his delight in the conflicts in the present life and the other, his confidence in life to come.

A man's whole philosophy of life is influenced largely by his conception of God, so Koheleth's cynicism, Omar's despair, and Browning's optimism are largely the result of each one's idea of God. To Koheleth there is a God somewhere, but far away, indifferent to the cries of injustice and suffering. He believes it is a good thing to go to the temple to worship, but it is wise to let your words be few because God is in heaven and you are upon the earth. If you make a vow to God, perform it: at least, be honest in your dealings with Him. Evidently, at some time in his life, when he was doing the best he could

III. Conceptions
of God.

under the circumstances, evil fell upon him, undeserved, unexpected, so he decides God foreordains all things, catching men in the net of misfortune, taking him unawares. He even becomes fatalistic, since all things have been foreordained, and finds struggle vain. As he looks around, he sees the wicked flourishing while the good suffer and there seems no justice in the Universe. It is useless to try to relieve oppression because God knows about it and apparently doesn't care. However, he can't help believing that God approves of the happiness of men. A child of the Hebrews, he has been taught that the Hebrew's God, all knowing, all powerful, is a jealous God, visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children, a stern Master. However, Koheleth is a thinker and will not accept his early teaching without challenging it. Scholars doubt if he said many of the things about God that are found under his name. It is quite probable that he left God out of his discussion entirely, his irreverence prompting commentators to insert pious phrases, lest the people be misled. One is led to believe, however, that his constant search for God and his inability to find Him has made him say that God has put eternity into the heart of man simply to

mock him, keeping him forever searching, never finding. In spite of his inability to find God, he feels that there is one somewhere, which takes some of the sting from his vanity of vanities.

While Koheleth has some hope of God, Omar goes to the extreme of despair in his search for God. A student of Mohammedanism, he has been taught to believe that God is cruel, omnipotent, foreordaining all things. He, too, like Koheleth, lives in a day of uncertainty, seeing oppression and disaster visiting apparently innocent people. His keen mind questions. Is there a God and does He care? His religion says there is and He doesn't care, in fact, He planned everything from the beginning. His reason tells him that this is impossible, and so he searches. If God made man weak and deliberately placed temptation in his way will He hold him responsible for the outcome? If He does, He would better ask the forgiveness of man, but, perhaps, after all, He is "a good fellow." Omar, seeing humanity mis-shapen in body and soul, scoffingly asks if the hand of the Potter shook when such distorted vessels were made! Again, it seems to him, God is the Master of the show and human beings

His playthings that He moves about at will. If this be true, all effort, all struggle is useless; one may as well accept the inevitable. Like Koheleth, he falls back on fate as the controlling force of the Universe. In the temple, he has found hypocrisy and deceit, but in the beauty of the rose garden he thinks he may possibly catch a glimpse of the Divine. Anyway, better frequent the tavern than the temple! If one knew nothing about Omar save his verses, one might think him a dilettante playing with deep questions, but knowing him as the foremost scientist of his day, one cannot doubt his honest seeking and his keen disappointment in not finding. His final decision to forget in the wine cup all his vain searching seems to be the depth of despair.

In direct contrast to Omar and Koheleth is Browning with his wholesome, happy consciousness of the reality of God. He has the assurance that God is and realizes that all the struggling of the human soul tends toward attaining the Divine. He frankly admits that his idea of God has been given to him by Christ who said, "He, that hath seen me, hath seen the Father." Since Christ's ministry to mankind was motivated by

love, so God's relation to man must likewise be a manifestation of love. From PAULINE to ASOLANDO, the poet strikes this note over and over again. Especially is this clear in AN EPISTLE where the Arabian physician longs for the assurance that the "All Great were the All Loving too." There can be no doubt about Browning's idea of God as love and of love being the motivating power of the Universe. Browning's God does not stand afar off, looking with indifferent eyes upon the sorrows and struggles of mankind, rather, He is ever present, lending His aid, lifting, encouraging, helping man to higher achievements. Indeed, the poet conceives of Him as dwelling in all creation from the minutest beginnings up through man, and the soul of man is a god in the making -- each rebuff, each struggle bringing him nearer the ultimate divinity. Since God is love, it is love in the soul of man that makes him infinite. Paracelsus, in his search for truth through knowledge, misses attaining his high ambition because he leaves the idea of love, which is the final truth, out of his plan. When at length he realizes his mistake, he urges mankind to press the lamp of God, which is love, to his bosom, then he will see that there is good in what seems evil.

love, and that's the reason to me that I believe in a
manifestation of love. From the time I was a child, the
good things that come over me every day, again, again,
is in this story in the Bible, where the angels are
shown before the presence of the Father, and the Son,
and the Holy Spirit. There can be no doubt as
to the Father's love of the Son and of love being
the greatest power of the Universe. The Father's love
does not stand still, looking with indifference
upon the progress and struggle of nations, nations
He is ever present, looking the old, the new, the
old, helping and to higher civilization. Indeed, the
great goodness of Him as dwelling in all creation from
the smallest organisms up through man, and the world
of man is a part of the Father -- the Father, the
Father, looking his power and infinite ability.
Since God is love, if a love in the soul of man that
makes his spiritual. Therefore, in his power for
truth through knowledge, which elevates his high as
often because he loves the love of love, which is
the final truth, but of his love. When it reaches us
realized his mission, as given to him to give the
love of God, which is love, to his people, that he
will see that there is love in that sense still.

Browning does not close his eyes to what men call evil; he looks at it frankly and pictures it vividly for all men to read, but in it, he sees purpose, God working for the perfection of the human soul. Like Omar and Koheleth, he looks upon human suffering, but instead of seeing a mocking or indifferent God he sees a loving hand shaping a vessel, bringing it to perfection. With such a conception of God, it is perfectly natural that Browning should see the world as a training ground for the human soul. He feels certain that what now seems evil will eventually prove good. Nor is Browning different from all mankind. His deductions are not the result of blind acceptance of childhood teaching. Like Omar and Koheleth, he has faced doubt. When he has felt all was secure, a sudden pain, an unexpected turn of fortune, has turned his faith aside and doubt has crept in. The very fact that he has faced doubt and risen above it makes his faith the stronger. Whereas, Koheleth and Omar feel that God withholds knowledge from mankind to mock him, Browning feels that man's knowledge is limited that he may be thrown back on God's love as the final truth. It is Browning's confidence in the love of God that gives him his happy outlook on life,

Showing that the love of God is not only
but it is the love of God which is the
for all who are in love, for in it, the love of God
everything for the possession of the human soul. Like
God and humanity, the love of God is not only
instead of seeing a number of indifferent God for
even a loving man, giving a reward, bringing it to
perfection. With such a conception of God, it is not
fearful natural that anything should not be the world as
a feeling of love for the human soul. The love of
God is not that we love God with a feeling of
God, but it is the love of God for all humanity.
The education and not the result of the love of God
of children and adults. The love of God is not only
has been found. When we love God, we love God, a
much for, as we love God, we love God, and we love
his love and the love of God is not only the love
that we love God and love God and love God in love
the love of God. When we love God, we love God and God
love and God with the knowledge of love and love to
God's love, which is the love of God is not only
little love, as we love God on God's love as
the love of God. It is the love of God in the
love of God and love of God is not only the love of God

and it is the lack of such confidence that gives Omar and Koheleth their dark interpretations of life.

Because of the failure to find God, Omar and Koheleth fall back on the pleasure of the moment as the only thing of which each can be sure. Even though Koheleth maintains that seeking pleasure is merely a chasing after the wind, he advises man to eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow he may die. Omar's keen mind reaches out to solve the riddle of the Universe; baffled, it returns to the present to realize the wine of life is oozing drop by drop. Now is the garden exquisite with rose and nightingale; now is the bearer of saki young and joyous; now is the wine sparkling. Sieze the fragrance of the rose ere it fades; love the maid while yet the flush of youth is on her cheek; drink the wine before the sparkle dies; live today to the full for tomorrow you die; you return to the Nothing from whence you came. Both men remind one of the old Eastern story about a traveler in the Steppes who suddenly realizes he is being pursued by a ferocious animal. Looking about for a means of escape, he sees a dried up well into which he springs. To his horror, he sees, lying in the bottom

IV. Attitudes
toward
pleasure.

and it is the task of every generation to give back
and to the world the best of its life.

History of the world is the story of the struggle
between the good and the evil in the human mind.

It is the story of the struggle between the good and the evil
in the human mind, and it is the story of the struggle between the good and the evil
in the human mind.

It is the story of the struggle between the good and the evil
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It is the story of the struggle between the good and the evil
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in the human mind.

of the pit, a great dragon ready to devour him. He catches hold of a branch of a wild plant growing out of the side of the well, thinking that he may prolong life a short while, not daring to climb down for fear of the dragon, nor to climb out for terror of the wild beast, so there he clings. His arms are losing strength and he knows the end is not far off, but he is determined to live as long as possible. Then, to his dismay, he sees two mice approach the root of the plant to which he is clinging and begin to gnaw toward each other. Destruction is inevitable. Suddenly, to his delight, he notices drops of honey on the leaves of the plant to which he is clinging. Pulling himself up by his weary arms, he stretches out his tongue and licks the sweetness as long as life lasts. Both Omar and Koheleth take this rather desperate attitude toward life; they see very little, if anything, ahead, but the present is sweet. Koheleth, however, is moderate in his enjoyment of the present, while Omar gives himself unreservedly to the pleasure of the moment. This may be due to the fact that Koheleth feels that God approves of his pleasure, while Omar, in his baffled soul, mocks the Potter "whose hand shakes" and who after all may be "a good

fellow", so he takes the cash and lets the credit go. Koheleth seems calm in his soul despite his restless searching, while Omar's soul is torn with conflict; despair makes him apparently flippant at times, and yet, underneath is the wistful yearning for satisfaction.

Quite different is Browning's attitude, even though he is no recluse, not living the life of a secluded saint, but that of a man who enjoys life to the full. No one could write that exuberant expression of the pure joy of physical living as expressed in SAUL who has not experienced the delights of rest after the fatigue of long exertion, the refreshing dip in the cool waters after heated labor, the pulsing blood and the feeling of physical fitness. He knows the joys of requited love. His keen mind knows the satisfaction of struggling with difficult problems and finding a solution. Yet, his philosophy does not accept mere pleasure as the end of existence. To him the only reason for living is the struggle to attain one's highest development. If one fails, that is not the disgrace, but to have a low aim is unpardonable. Paracelsus aimed high to achieve all knowledge and he failed to attain his aim, however, he did grow and

eventually saw how to arrive at satisfaction through love. Browning's greatest interest in life is watching men and women with their inner conflicts, the struggle never ceasing while life lasts. He welcomes "each rebuff, that turns life's smoothness rough." To him it is the hard things of life, the sorrows, the disappointments, and the pain, not the easy ones, not the pleasures, that make life worth while. Nor does he believe the struggle ends with this existence, but continues through many worlds, perhaps, until eventually perfection is reached. Because of this idea of struggle, the pleasure of the moment does not seem to him all important as it does to Omar, nor even reasonably important as it does to Koheleth.

When thinking of pleasures one naturally considers the love of men and women. One wonders what happened to Koheleth to make him so bitter against womanhood. His whole experience with humanity must have been unfortunate, because he finds only one man in a thousand worthy to be trusted, and not one woman. In fact, to him, she is a snare and a net to capture the hearts of men. One is tempted to believe one of two things: either he gave all the fervent love of his youth to

V. Ideas
of love.

one woman, who carelessly cast it aside, thus shattering his faith in all womanhood; or in his endeavor to understand life, he tried the companionship of many women, his own fickle heart prompting him to condemn all womanhood. There is another possible explanation, that of an unhappy marriage with a woman unfaithful to her vows. Judging from the book of Ecclesiastes, as a whole, one rejects the second reason, and has no way of deciding between the first and the third. In spite of his bitter attack against woman in general, he realizes a happy union is one of the chief joys of life, because he urges the young man to enjoy life with the woman of his love, intimating that there is but one woman in the love of a man.

Omar, on the other hand, seems to find much satisfaction and delight in the companionship of woman. We can see him in the fragrant rose garden on the hillside, reclining under a rose laden tree, watching the lights and shadows play on the distant vineyards. He has a book that he glances at now and then until the graceful saki bearer comes to him. He urges her to recline beside him and together they enjoy the beauty and fragrance of the rose garden. He revels in the

loveliness of her youth, the sweetness of her presence. They enjoy the roses, the wine, and the book of verse. Gradually a sadness comes over him. Why should anything so sweet, so warm, so full of life as she grow old? Why should he virile, achieving, die? They drop the verse and begin to discuss the problems of the Universe. Ah! if it were in their power, they would remould the Universe nearer to their hearts' desire. We have no way of knowing the truth about Omar's loves, whether he had one or many, or whether, alone in life, he satisfied the longings of his soul in imagining himself in the sweet company of the wine bearer. Some would have us believe the last. However, the general impression one gets from his quatrains is that of a man who has had many loves.

Of Browning's attitude toward love there can be no doubt. Although he makes struggle, and not pleasure, the reason for being, he makes it equally plain that to him love is the controlling force of the Universe. God, Himself, is Love. Browning delights in writing about the love of beauty, the love of truth, the love of God, the love of humanity, but his greatest delight is in studying men and women as they pass through the

crisis of love, often measuring their characters by the way in which they meet this crisis. He has been criticized as being too cold, too analytical in his treatment of love, not giving himself over to the abandonment of the all consuming passion. It is true, he does allow his lovers to think of other things beside the beloved one, as in *THE LAST RIDE TOGETHER*, but, nevertheless, he has felt the divine fire. Doubtless, many a reader has been startled to find in his last volume of verse those stirring poems dealing with the momentary passion of human love: *NOW, SUMMUM BONUM, A PEARL - A GIRL*. It hardly seems possible that they could come from the same mind as *PARACELUS*; they are as full of feeling as Goethe's love lyrics, showing Browning had all the capacity for passionate emotion that is a part of virile manhood. It is evident these are the expressions of youth, hot and pulsating. It may be there were other such poems destroyed by the poet who deemed them unworthy. The poem *SPECULATION* seems one of maturer years, when the spiritual ideal of love had largely taken possession of the man. Very probably, it was written after the death of his wife and the longing for the physical presence of his beloved makes him willing to surrender "Heaven, Man,

Nature, Art", if only they might be together, never to part again. The idea of love as the purifier of souls appears in his earliest poem, *PAULINE*, where the lover, in the clear light of his emotion, sees his past life as vile and unworthy. Caponsacchi has the same experience when he sees Pompilia, hating his past life and resolving to become worthy of his love. To the poet, the fact that one loves is enough, whether or not he be loved in return. In *EVELYN HOPE* the lover knows not whether he was ever loved, but his delight in the beautiful girl has so lifted his soul that he is willing to wait not only throughout this world, but throughout worlds to come for the fulfillment of his love. It is the one who loves who is enriched; the one who loves not or dares not love is impoverished forever. He does not consider love a gradual growth from acquaintance through friendship, but a sudden overwhelming passion that comes with the glance of the eye, each soul recognizing his mate instantaneously. It is as if Dante walked upon the earth again, seeing his Beatrice. Caponsacchi, passing the house of Pompilia, glances into her eyes, a new heaven and a new earth open for both of them from that day on; even though mutual possession is impossible, beauty dwells

within, in spite of hatred, misunderstanding, and cruel murder. The fact that Browning allows love to come to those legally bound to others has brought criticism upon him, some saying he would disrupt the most sacred institution of the home. It seems, rather, that he emphasizes the necessity of never founding a home save on the great eternal truth of love. In his own experience was one supreme, all embracing love, that for his wife, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, for whose sake he is willing to be a happy exile from England. Omar and his sáki bearer in the rose garden seem the mere semblance of love compared with the years of beautiful companionship of the Brownings in Italy. Since they were never separated a night from the day of their marriage until Mrs. Browning's death, there were no occasions for personal poems of longing for her, although Browning has several poems that touch upon the separation of loved ones. Only occasionally does he write to or of her, but when he does, he puts into the poem the strength and love of his manhood. In ONE WORD MORE he dedicates his volume MEN AND WOMEN to her, calling her his "moon of poets", saying, "where the heart lies, let the brain lie, also."

which, in spite of nature, has been made, and
great matter. The fact that the world is
made in such a way as to be able to
control and give, and give, and give, and
and and and and and and and and and and
that he has been the recipient of never-ending
from him in the great world of love. In his
own experience and his own, and his own
that for the sake of the world, he has
shown that he is willing to be a man, and
showing. That is the only way in the world
and the only way in the world of love
and of the world of love, and of the world
that, those things were never before, and
the day of the world, and the world, and
there were no other things for the world
the day, although the world has been
shown upon the world of love, and
showing that he is so, and so, and so,
he has been the only one, and the only one,
show. In the world, he has been the only one,
and he is so, and he is so, and he is so,
showing, and the world, and the world, and

It is not a passionate poem, but is filled with the warmth and quiet joy of a man whose soul has found peace, the expression of a man who loves deeply and sincerely with his whole being. Very similar in tone is BY THE FIRESIDE in which he imagines himself and Mrs. Browning years hence when the strain and stress of life have passed, quietly sitting alone, thinking of the full, happy past, dreaming of the future, content one with the other, an expression of his complete soul satisfaction in his love for her. Both of these poems lack the impetuosity of youthful passion, but hold the contentment of two souls in absolute harmony, the harmony of true marriage. After her death, when he speaks of her, it is not in such quiet, even tones; there is longing and yearning for her: he misses not only her physical presence, but the intellectual stimulus she has given him. In the RING AND THE BOOK, perhaps the greatest piece of work he ever did, he pauses at the end of the first section to give expression to his soul-hunger for her. He imagines himself giving his poems to her that even in some far off heaven she may take pride in his achievement; only the memory of her sustains him. Still more tense with feeling is PROSPICE where the ordeal of death to

him is passing through deep waters that he may clasp to his breast the soul of his soul. While Koheleth barely mentions love and Omar treats it flippantly, Browning makes the love between man and woman the highest attainment in life, an ennobling passion, lifting the lover to higher levels, sustaining and comforting him in sorrow. Such a love, in his eyes, comes only once and is eternal.

It is interesting to note how consistent each man is in his philosophy of life. Koheleth, thinking there may be a God somewhere, but far distant and uncaring, finding life deadly monotonous, having but little room for love in his scheme of things, living wholly in the present, naturally sees nothing to hope for after death. In fact, once in his disgust with life, he says that it is better never to have been born than to live to see injustice and sorrow upon the earth, but like most pessimists, he finds life worth holding on to and at times "light is sweet." In his more normal moments he decides it is better to be a live dog than a dead lion. In other words, it is better to be a living, ordinary person than a dead king, because while one is living he knows, at least, where

VI. Ideas of
death and
immortality.

he is and when he is dead he knows nothing, even though once he was powerful. The old Hebrew cannot see beyond the grave; as the beast dies, so does man, the same end awaiting both; all are of the dust and return to the dust. To him, that is the most vain thing in existence, to strive, to suffer, and to endure life only in the end to be annihilated. Because of this inability to see anything beyond the grave, all endeavor seems to him to be merely a chasing after the wind, a vanity of vanities.

Omar has a similar experience, unable to find God in spite of ceaseless searching, making the most of the joy of the moment as the only tangible reality. Once, to be sure, he caught a glimpse of the Divine when the thought came to him that perhaps the human soul might leave its body as the sultan leaves his tent, and soar off to newer, better fields of endeavor, but that is only a vague hope; he has no assurance. He seems to have a dim idea that there may be life after death, when the great judge of the Universe may hold men responsible for deeds done in the flesh, but he can hardly accept that. He never mentions the Moham-medan's paradise, as one would expect a lover of sen-

He is not dead, he is dead to the world, when
though once he was powerful. The old Henry James
and beyond the grave; as the world dies, and dies
the work and waiting, all the of the heart and
return to the earth. To him, that is the end
thing is existence, to others, to others, and to the
date life only is the end to be anticipated. James
of this inability to see anything beyond the grave,
all whatever comes to him is to be seen as a shadow of
for the mind, a shadow of reality.
There was a similar experience, made by him
God in spite of material existence, seeing the world
at the joy of the moment as the only thing to be
done, to be done, to be done, to be done, to be done
when the thought came to him that the world was
good, at least, the body of the world, the world
that, and that it is good, better than of existence,
but that is only a false hope; he has no answer, he
cannot to keep a his love for the world, he is the world
death, when the great truth of the world, the world
and responsible for the world, the world, the world
can hardly answer that. The world is the world, the world
world's answer, as the world exists a love, as the

sual pleasure to anticipate. Sometimes, he thinks of the grass and flowers as souls reborn, and, again, he begs the bearer of wine to pour the sweet juice of the grape over his grave that he may drink it even in death. He speaks of the soul returning to the Nothing it set out from, coming to Koheleth's conclusion, "dust into dust, and under dust to lie, sans wine, sans song, sans winger, sans end." Koheleth's outlook on life is consistently grey, with few lighter shadings, while Omar's is marked with sharp lights and shadows. His search is so real, his disappointment in not finding so keen, that he throws himself with abandon into the joys of the moment. If death ends all, very well, make the most of the present and so he drains the cup of pleasure with a heavy heart.

It is difficult to say whether Browning's rich optimism is the result of his belief in immortality or whether his faith in the future life comes from his optimism; they go hand in hand. To him, the soul is immortal, "a god in the germ", forever developing in world after world until perfection is reached. He sees earth as a training school where each failure, each rebuff but stirs man on to further effort. As

he looks upon broken lives, disappointed men and women, he cannot believe death ends all; there must be some place, some future existence where the tangles of life are str^aightened out. Suffering, disappointment, failure are promises of future happiness. Nothing of good or of beauty is ever lost, even that which seems evil now will in some future world prove to have been good. Because life is so incomplete here, Browning feels that there must be a future existence to complete the whole, as Abt Vogler said,

"On earth the broken arcs, in the
heaven a perfect round."

The supreme thing is not accomplishment in the eyes of man, but honest endeavor in the sight of God. Men may scoff, misunderstand, hurt one, but God knows and understands, and the growth of the soul is achieved. From youth to age man's whole task is soul development which is carried beyond the grave. Whatever is begun here, he believes, will be completed there, even love. Whereas, many believe the love between individuals to be temporary, Browning sees it as everlasting. He welcomes death as the last great adventure to be met unafraid. Beyond death, he sees, first of all, his beloved, the soul of his soul; then he finds Power

revealed as Love. He believes that all he has struggled against, all he has misunderstood will be made plain. However, his is not a heaven where one remains forever in bliss doing nothing, for he is confident that there are other worlds, other adventures, other achievements to come, life everlasting, ever developing. A happy, wholesome view of life after death, -- a great contrast to Koheleth's annihilation, and to Omar's uncertainty.

It might seem that three men so widely separated VII. Conclusion in time and place as Koheleth, Omar Khayyám and Robert Browning would be very different, yet, the heart of mankind has ever been the same, searching for God, struggling with the problem of evil, seeking to understand the Universe. No human being can experience life, ambition foiled, hopes deceived, soul and body torn with suffering, the joy of achievement, and the ecstasy of love, without asking, "Why?" Great joy or great sorrow lifts the soul and sends it seeking a greater Soul to understand, and so the questions arise. Is there a God? Is there any aim in life? What happens after death? Sometimes, after bitter disillusionment, one says with Koheleth, "Vanity of vanities, all

is vanity," thinking he has reached the depths of pessimism, but Koheleth was not altogether a pessimist, he could enjoy life and he found, "Light is sweet." Then, again, after the soul has been baffled in its earnest seeking, it turns to pleasure with Omar, crying, "Drink! for, once dead, you never shall return." And yet, Omar was not a mere pleasure seeker, he had his moments of high aspiration and eager searching. When life is full of joy one agrees with Browning,

"God's in his heaven, --
All's right with the world!"

but with him there were questionings and moments of sorrow. As one considers these three men, who have so truly expressed the longings of the soul of man, he finds himself in sympathy sometimes with one, sometimes with another. In the final analysis, however, he is bound to find in Browning the only satisfying answers to his questions.

SUMMARY

The following summary of the work done during the past year is based on the results of the research conducted by the author and his associates. The work has been carried out in the field of the study of the history of the development of the human mind. The results of the research are presented in the following summary.

The first part of the summary deals with the history of the development of the human mind. It is divided into three main sections: the first section deals with the history of the development of the human mind from the beginning of time to the present; the second section deals with the history of the development of the human mind from the present to the future; and the third section deals with the history of the development of the human mind from the future to the present.

The second part of the summary deals with the history of the development of the human mind. It is divided into three main sections: the first section deals with the history of the development of the human mind from the beginning of time to the present; the second section deals with the history of the development of the human mind from the present to the future; and the third section deals with the history of the development of the human mind from the future to the present.

The third part of the summary deals with the history of the development of the human mind. It is divided into three main sections: the first section deals with the history of the development of the human mind from the beginning of time to the present; the second section deals with the history of the development of the human mind from the present to the future; and the third section deals with the history of the development of the human mind from the future to the present.

SUMMARY

1940

SUMMARY

In this paper the writer has made a study of Ecclesiastes, Omar Khayyám, and Robert Browning. In Part I, each man has been treated separately, his life and times considered only in so far as they influenced his life-view. Estimates and criticisms of the men and their works as given by scholars have been noted. A large part of this section, however, is given to direct quotations from the men themselves in which they give their own point of view in their own words. In Part II, the writer has brought together the evidence presented in Part I, pointing out striking comparisons and contrasts.

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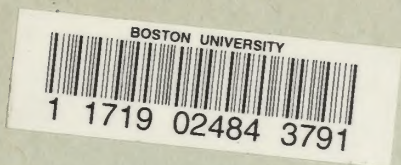
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